

THE · COMMAND  
· · OF · THE · SEA · ·  
·  
· ARCHIBALD · HURD ·



LIBRARY  
University of  
California  
Irvine

VA  
454  
H9



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2008 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation



THE COMMAND OF  
THE SEA



# THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

SOME PROBLEMS OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE  
CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF THE  
GERMAN NAVY ACT, 1912

BY

ARCHIBALD HURD

AUTHOR OF

"NAVAL EFFICIENCY : THE WAR READINESS OF THE FLEET,"

"THE BRITISH FLEET : IS IT SUFFICIENT AND EFFICIENT ?"

ETC.

TEXT OF THE FIVE GERMAN NAVY ACTS

LONDON

CHAPMAN & HALL, LIMITED

1912

*All rights reserved.*

*Printed by*  
*The Westminster Press 411a Harrow Road, London, W.*

## PREFACE.

**T**HE German Navy Law Amendment Act was passed by the Reichstag on May 21st. This is the last of the five enactments for the expansion of the German Fleet, and it is the most notable and menacing to her neighbours.

It is proposed to add only three large ships, two cruisers and seventy-two submarines to the "established strength" of the fleet, but the grave feature of the Act consists in the resolve to set up a new standard of naval efficiency.

For many years all nations in the interest of economy kept a large proportion of their men-of-war in reserve. Under the impetus of Germany the tendency of administrations has lately been to achieve rapid action—quick transition from the conditions of peace to those of hostilities. Now the German naval authorities have taken a further step in the same direction, which must impose on Europe the burden of war in times of peace.

In future, within four hundred miles of the British Isles, all the most effective ships of the German Navy—battleships, cruisers and torpedo craft—will be held on the leash—manned, stored, victualled and incessantly trained.

The German Fleet as now planned will be superior in fighting strength and more instantly ready for

aggression or defence than the fleet of any Power in the past.

So far as shipbuilding is concerned, the British people knew in 1909—in the words of Sir Edward Grey—that “Germany was creating a fleet larger than had ever existed before.” Now it has been decided that, winter and summer alike, at moments when there is not a cloud on the political horizon, and at moments when there are signs of storm, the greater portion of these ships shall be kept on a war footing, the remainder being furnished with nucleus crews which can be increased to full strength in a few hours.

The purpose of this volume is to explain the character of the new German Navy Act and to consider its influence upon the British Fleet and on some of the correlated problems of British and Imperial Defence.

The present writer can claim that during the twenty years which he has devoted to the study of naval affairs, he has never exaggerated the dangers which have threatened British sea power, and in the present volume he has set forth the facts of the new situation without any desire to excite unnecessary alarm. But it must be apparent that unless adequate measures are speedily taken by the British peoples our naval supremacy will be in serious jeopardy and our homes, our trade, and our Empire in peril.

Acknowledgment is made of the kind permission of the Editor of the *Fortnightly Review* to use in the preparation of this volume articles contributed to that publication.

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	PREFACE	V
	INTRODUCTION	ix
I	THE NEW GERMAN NAVY ACT	I
II	THE STORY OF GERMAN NAVAL EXPAN- SION, WITH THE TEXT OF THE FIVE NAVY ACTS	39
III	THE DANGER OF THE OVERSEAS DOMI- NIONS	61
IV	THE TRIUMPH OF THE DREADNOUGHT POLICY, 1905-12	91
V	THE NAVY'S NEED OF MEN	118
VI	THE POLICY OF HOME DEFENCE : INVASION OR STARVATION	135
	(1) THE CASE AGAINST COMPULSORY TRAINING	138
	(2) THE CASE AGAINST INVASION	151
	(3) THE DANGER AND THE DEFENCE	175
	(4) AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMME	182
VII	THE INVASION PROBLEM : ITALY'S "BOLT FROM THE BLUE"	189
VIII	DEFENCE AND FINANCE	210
IX	THE BLESSINGS OF NAVAL ARMAMENTS	229

## JUSTIFICATION OF BRITISH SUPREMACY

---

We should have ample margin (because) the consequences of defeat at sea are so much greater to us than they would be to Germany or France. . . .

There is no parity of risk. Our position is highly artificial. We are fed from the sea. We are an unarmed people. We possess a very small Army. We are the only Power in Europe which does not possess a large Army.

We cannot menace the independence or the vital interests of any great continental state; we cannot invade any continental state. We do not wish to do so, but even if we had the wish we have not got the power.

People talk of the proportion which the navies of different countries should bear to the commercial interests of the different nations—the proportion of France, the proportion of Italy, the proportion of Germany; but when we consider our naval strength we are not thinking of our commerce, but of our freedom. We are not thinking of our trade, but of our lives.

These are facts which justify British naval supremacy in the face of the world.

We must never conduct our affairs so that the Navy of any single Power would be able to engage us at any single moment, even our least favourable moment, with any reasonable prospects of success.

*First Lord of the Admiralty, House of Commons,  
March 18th, 1912.*



## INTRODUCTION

“Every foreign Power knows that if we have established, as we have, and if we mean to maintain, as we do, an indisputable superiority on the sea, it is not for the purpose of aggression or adventure, but it is that we may fulfil the elementary duty which we owe to the Empire, to uphold beyond reach, yes, and beyond risk of successful attack from outside, our commerce, our industry, our homes.”

*The Right Hon. H. H. Asquith, Nov. 9th, 1908.*

“There are two ways in which a hostile country can be crushed. It can be conquered, or it can be starved. If Germany were masters in our home waters she could apply both methods to Britain. Were Britain ten times master in the North Sea, she could apply neither method to Germany. Without a superior fleet, Britain would no longer count as a Power. Without any fleet at all, Germany would remain the greatest Power in Europe.”

*Mr. Balfour, in the “Nord und Sud,” June, 1912.*

IN introducing the Navy Estimates for the financial year 1912-13, the First Lord of the Admiralty remarked that the Germans were “a people of robust mind, whose strong and masculine sense and high courage did not recoil from, and was not offended by, plain and blunt statements of fact, if expressed with courtesy and sincerity.” It is in this spirit that this volume, devoted to the consideration of the problems of Imperial defence which the action of Germany has forced into prominence, has been prepared.

We know that Germany possesses an army without its equal in the world in numbers—an army which on a war footing would rise to a strength of 3,500,000, and that this army is being increased, and we know that Germany, already possessing the second largest navy in the world, has now passed an Act for increasing her standing fleet above the strength which the British Navy has ever attained in the past ; but we do not know what policy is held by Germans to justify this vast and unprecedented accumulation of armaments, both on land and on sea, because the official explanations have not been published : the intimate discussions on the new Army and Navy Bills were conducted in secret.

In ignorance of the real motives which have prompted these measures, the British peoples—those of the United Kingdom as well as those of the oversea dominions—whose existence depends on the supremacy of the Navy—are compelled by the interest of self-preservation to examine carefully the character of the new Acts and particularly the one which has for its aim the further expansion of German naval power.

The cause to which this naval expansion in Germany is attributed by leading German politicians is the “widespread belief shared by many people of very advanced views and friendly feeling towards the British nation, that Great Britain will *one day* try to get rid of German competition and the menace of the German Navy by forcing war upon Germany and destroying as many German ships as possible.” One day ? If one day, why not to-day ? If there

were any foundation for this "widespread belief," why should England wait? In the first twenty years of the history of the German Empire England had a Navy seven or eight times the size of the German Navy, and year by year competition in trade increased. If she was so jealous of German prosperity, why did she wait? In the past ten years, when the competition of the mart has become yet more keen, she has had a fleet three or four times as powerful as that of Germany. Why did she wait? If she still nourishes this dream of ruining her legitimate trade competitor by force of her arms afloat, why has she not struck the blow in all these years when Germany has been weak on the sea?

The answer is very simple—because the idea has never entered the brain of a British statesman. During a quarter of a century when the two nations have been competing fiercely in all the markets of the world, have been finessing for commercial and territorial advantages in this or that quarter of the globe, no one thought of such a scheme. But mark this. If the mad dream of crushing a successful trade rival by the weight of the British Fleet ever existed, is it to be imagined that the British people would stand by and watch ship after ship of the most powerful types being added to the German Fleet in accordance with successive Navy Acts until Germany will rival England in naval armaments unless England takes reciprocal action? If this plan had been thought of, would England wait, as under Liberal and Conservative Governments, she has waited year after year, while one German Navy Act after

another has been passed in a continually ascending scale? If Germany is to be strangled, why does England—two to one now against Germany in naval power—hold her hand? The truth is that this “widespread belief” is merely one of the bogeys deliberately created in Germany in order to foster the naval expansion movement and excite the national feeling, without which it was found that no progress was made. So long as the naval agitation in Germany was carried on with truthfulness and with honesty, it failed to enlist support. Consequently this bogey, which does not stand a moment’s examination, was deliberately invented against all the teachings of Anglo-German relations. The German people, patriotic and fearful, rose to the bait at once. The German Navy Acts of 1900, 1906, 1908 and 1912 were passed.

The new naval situation created by Germany under such conditions justifies feelings of alarm. As Mr. Balfour in his article in the *Nord und Sud* has reminded Germans, the position is one which causes great anxiety :

The greatest military Power, and the second greatest naval Power in the world, is adding both to her Army and to her Navy. She is increasing the strategic railways which lead to the frontier States—not merely to frontier States which themselves possess powerful armies, but to small States, which can have no desire but to remain neutral if their formidable neighbours should unhappily become belligerents. She is in like manner modifying her naval arrangements so as to make her naval strength instantly effective.

It is conceivable that all this may be only in order to

render herself impregnable against attack. Such an object would certainly be commendable ; though the efforts undergone to secure it might (to outside observers) seem in excess of any possible danger. If all nations could be made impregnable to the same extent, peace would doubtless be costly, but at least it would be secure.

Unfortunately no mere analysis of the German preparation for war will show for what purposes they are designed. A tremendous weapon has been forged ; every year adds something to its efficiency and power ; it is as formidable for purposes of aggression as for purposes of defence. But to what end it was originally designed, and in what cause it will ultimately be used, can only be determined, if determined at all, by extraneous considerations.

The official explanation of the new and vast expenditure upon the navy and army is that it is intended purely for purposes of defence, and that the German Government entertain no aggressive designs. The difficulty is to reconcile these official explanations with the character of the naval preparations which are now about to be carried a further step forward. For reasons which have not been communicated to the world the Reichstag has agreed not only to make a considerable addition to the land forces of the Empire, but to a vast expansion of the German Fleet.

When the scheme which has now been approved reaches full fruition Germany will be able to assemble at short notice in the North Sea and the Baltic (which will be strategically one, when the enlargement of the Kiel Canal has been completed) no fewer than 53 ships of the line, of which in 1920

35 will be Dreadnoughts. This formidable naval force can be reinforced by the new " flying squadron " of four battle or armoured cruisers, as well as two smaller cruisers, and there will be no fewer than 144 destroyers, 72 submarines and a number of aerial craft associated with the great battle fleet which is now about to be organised.

If this new scheme of naval preparation is contrasted with the plans entertained as recently as 1898 when the first Navy Act was passed, it must be difficult for the British peoples to accept in all sincerity, as they would desire to accept, the official assurances that this great armada is intended merely for the purposes of self-defence. It is common knowledge that the ships which have recently been built and are now being built are not designed purely for defensive purposes ; they are vessels of maximum power with as great a radius of action as the vessels of the British Fleet with their world-wide duties. In all sincerity, so far there has been vouchsafed to the world no adequate explanation of this vast accumulation of naval armaments. The only explanations which have been given are of a disquieting nature and are unofficial. The situation is one which confuses and embarrasses all the statesmen of Europe owing to the absence of any official statement of motive which accords with the facts.

In his singularly able statement on Anglo-German relations, Mr. Balfour dismissed the idea that the German people wish to make an attack on their neighbours, but at the same time he called attention



to the grave danger which these renewed preparations for war throw into prominence. Mr. Balfour reminded his German readers, familiar with the Pan-German propaganda, what the danger is which fills Europe with apprehension.

It lies in the co-existence of that marvellous instrument of warfare which is in the German Army and Navy, with the assiduous, I had almost said the organised, advocacy of a policy which it seems impossible to reconcile with the peace of the world or the rights of nations. For those who accept this policy German development means German territorial expansion. All countries which hinder, though it be only in self-defence, the realisation of this ideal, are regarded as hostile ; and war, or the threat of war, is deemed the natural and fitting method by which the ideal is to be accomplished.

Let German students, if they will, redraw the map of Europe in harmony with what they conceive to be the present distribution of the Germanic race ; let them regard the German Empire of the twentieth century as the heir-at-law of all territories included in the Holy Roman Empire of the twelfth ; let them assume that Germany should be endowed at the cost of other nations with over-seas dominions proportionate to her greatness in Europe. But do not let them ask Englishmen to approve. We have had too bitter an experience of the ills which flow from the endeavour of any single State to dominate Europe, we are too surely convinced of the perils which such a policy, were it successful, would bring upon ourselves as well as others, to treat them as negligible. Negligible surely they are not. In periods of international calm they always make for increasing armaments ; in periods of international friction they aggravate the difficulties of diplomacy.

This then is the position. Germany is endeavouring to become as supreme upon the sea as she is upon the land ; it is reiterated officially that she has no designs of aggression, while at the same time powerful agitators throughout the Empire are preaching a policy which is a policy of aggression. The situation is one which is well calculated to arouse the fears of all the nations of the world, because for the first time in history a great Power has definitely asserted its intention of being supremely powerful both by sea and by land.

The predominance of Germany as a military Power in Europe suggests problems mainly of interest to her continental neighbours : the predominance of Germany as a naval Power raises problems which must be faced by all the nations of the world, because while military power is restricted in its activity, naval power is fluid, and can be exerted in either of the two hemispheres, conferring unlimited range on the army. In particular the increase in Germany's standing Navy may affect the views which hitherto the British people have held on the possibility of these islands being invaded. If the German Fleet is increased, without a proportionate increase in the British Navy, by 1920 Germany will be in a position to command northern waters, and the North Sea as a barrier between the predominant army of the German Empire and the British people, defenceless against such military odds, would cease to exist. It would be within the power of Germany to use her naval and military forces as a single weapon of aggression against the British or other oversea peoples ;



and even if this policy were not adopted it would still be within the capacity of the German Government to hold the main trade routes and starve the inhabitants of the British Isles into submission.

It is probable that the regular process of the expansion of the German Navy under the new Act will proceed without any revelation of the inner policy of the German Empire, and there are many indications that the efforts which are now being made on both sides of the North Sea to bring about a better understanding between the British and German peoples will gradually tend towards the removal of that feeling of bitterness which has so long existed between the two peoples. The German Government having carried its two Defence Acts through the Reichstag before an artificial cyclone of public opinion incensed against England—desires our friendship. We can welcome that prospect, but on distinct terms. Whatever our fears, one policy only is consistent with our dignity and our safety. Let us realise that :

(1) Naval policy, so far as it is concerned with the provision of ships, men, and stores, has no relation to foreign policy. Our naval requirements are, in a sense, a fixed quantity, in that they must correspond to a traditional scale of measurement, which is independent of our foreign relations. This is the aspect of naval policy which is open to public discussion, and in furtherance of which public opinion can be usefully employed, without reference to passing enmities, alliances, or friendships.

(2) Naval policy is related to foreign policy only  
*b*

in respect of its employment, the number of ships which should be kept in full commission, and their distribution on strategical principles in accord with our foreign relations, and the organisation of our reserve resources of ships and men. This aspect of naval policy must be dominated by the Foreign Office. In consultation with that department, the Admiralty, in full knowledge of foreign naval movements, must so dispose British naval forces as to suit the probable requirements of war—changing from year to year, as friendships grow hot or cold.

We should be a happier and better-loved people—because less subject to “ scares ” and less touchy at every little incident—if these views of our naval policy were acted upon.

So far as the general public is concerned, naval policy has no connection with our temporary relations with this or that Power. Yesterday we were in a position of “ splendid isolation ” ; to-day we have an *entente* with this country and an alliance with that ; and to-morrow we may once more boast—with possibly our hearts in our boots—of our “ splendid isolation.” The face of Europe may be changed in a week, or even a day, but it takes nearly three years to build a man-of-war from the time when Parliament’s sanction is sought by the Admiralty, a longer period to train a seaman gunner, and seven years to educate a responsible officer. Who can foresee what our relations will be with this or that Power six or seven years hence ? The map of the world may have been recoloured by that time.

There are good and sufficient reasons why we should

have an unchallenged and unchallengable Fleet. We have one line of defence only—the Fleet. The British Army, small in numbers, is our sword for use on land, which we can wield in defence of the Empire—East and West and South—only so long as we have the shield—the Fleet; the Army is a corollary to the Fleet to employ overseas, guarded to and fro in its passage by the Fleet, as in the South African war, or to repel any chance raiding force of necessarily small proportions, which in time of war may elude the Fleet.

Foreign policy—whether it be based on alliances or ententes or on isolation—and the scale of our armaments must be kept separate and apart and then we can face the renewed crisis in good heart and without panic, for the balance is in our favour. At this moment, when renewed naval competition is threatened, our superiority in every type of man-of-war is unquestioned—in most classes of ships, including battleships and cruisers, we are twice as strong as Germany. There is no doubt on this point. This view is supported by every credible reference book—by the “Navy League Annual” and by the more recently compiled “Naval Annual.” The exact position in which the British Navy stands in respect to armoured ships to-day has been admirably summed up in the following statement : \*

When we talk of the naval decline of Great Britain it is as well to realise that we have declined as regards only one of the principal maritime Powers, and moreover one that will not celebrate its jubilee as a nation for

\* *Naval and Military Record*, April 14th, 1912.

some years to come yet. As a matter of fact, *if the five principal naval Powers be taken it will be found that our position has improved rather than declined in recent years.* In the five years 1902 to 1906 inclusive a total armoured tonnage of 249,125 was launched for Great Britain, Germany, France, the United States and Japan, the tonnage and proportions of the various nations being as follows :

			Tons.			Per cent.
Great Britain	..	..	87,977	..	..	35.3
Germany	..	..	36,106	..	..	14.5
France	..	..	30,210	..	..	12.1
United States	..	..	73,184	..	..	29.4
Japan	..	..	21,648	..	..	8.7

In the subsequent five years, from 1907 to 1911 inclusive, the amount of armoured tonnage launched declined slightly to 243,440, thanks to the great reduction of American shipbuilding. Of this total—

			Tons.			Per cent.
Great Britain accounted for			89,450	..	..	36.8
Germany	„	„	63,050	..	..	25.9
France	„	„	39,290	..	..	16.1
United States	„	„	33,530	..	..	13.8
Japan	„	„	18,120	..	..	7.4

The greatest increase was, of course, in the case of Germany, whose share advanced from one-seventh of the whole in 1902-6 to just over a quarter in 1907-11, while the proportionate share of the United States fell from nearly a third to less than a seventh. The most unsatisfactory feature of the comparison is that whereas the Anglo-Saxon nations accounted altogether for 64.7 per cent. of the armoured tonnage put afloat between 1902 and 1906, they represent only 50.6 per cent. of that launched between 1907 and 1911.

The British share of the Dreadnoughts of the principal Powers is even more encouraging. Including the ships provided for in the current year—1912-13—these five nations possess 85 all told, and in all stages of construction, and their distribution is as follows :

	No.		Percentage.	
Great Britain .	..	36	..	42.4
Germany ..	..	23	..	27.1
United States	..	12	..	14.1
France ..	..	7	..	8.2
Japan ..	..	7	..	8.2

These figures, of course, only emphasise the keenness of the competition between Germany and ourselves, and perhaps there is little consolation in the improvement in our position relatively to the rest of the world when Germany has advanced so much more rapidly. In 1902-6 we launched 51,871 tons of armoured ships more than Germany; but in 1907-11 our superiority was only 26,400 tons, or slightly more than a half. It is curious to note that the combined British and American proportion of Dreadnoughts—56.5 per cent. of the whole included above—is rather greater than our combined share of armoured tonnage launched in 1907-11; but the American Navy promises to decline very considerably in the near future. Nor can it be forgotten that the Triple Alliance has 22 Dreadnoughts afloat to our 26, while their programmes, including the present year's, total 35 to our 36.

The same tendency may be traced in cruisers and torpedo craft. In all classes of ships the British Navy has held its own and to-day it occupies a position of unchallenged and unchallengable strength—more supreme in contrast with every other naval Power, except Germany, than for one hundred years past.

It is a complete misapprehension to state that British naval power has declined, or that we have called the "legions home." The fact is that whereas the fully commissioned ships were stationed mainly in the Mediterranean and the Far East ten years ago, now they are in the English Channel and the North Sea. There has been no "calling of the legions home." All that has happened is that where danger threatens, there the flower of the Navy is being trained in accordance with immemorial custom. We have retraced our steps and stand to-day where we stood during the Dutch war, but our position in extra-European waters is stronger than it was then. If Germany were Japan and Japan Germany—if in fact the relations of the two countries were reversed, then we should have a strong Mediterranean Fleet, as the half-way house to the Far East, and in the Far East we should have a large naval force. The majority of the armoured vessels of the Navy are in the English Channel and the North Sea, not because these are our home waters, but because first they are the main strategical theatre, and secondly, we have no need of them elsewhere, since we are supreme against every Power, except Japan and the United States, in the Pacific and the Atlantic. Outside European waters the British flag is still supported in supremacy as against every other European Navy. While alliances and friendships do not directly affect the standard of naval strength which we must maintain, they do affect very powerfully the distribution of naval force, and this is the explanation of the presence



## FLEETS OF THE OUTER SEAS.

## MEDITERRANEAN FLEET.

FOURTH BATTLE SQUADRON (Based on Gibraltar).

Albemarle	Duncan ( <i>Second Flag</i> )	Exmouth ( <i>Flag</i> )	Russell
Cornwallis			

MEDITERRANEAN CRUISER SQUADRON.

Good Hope ( <i>Flag</i> )	Hampshire	Lancaster	Suffolk
---------------------------	-----------	-----------	---------

DESTROYERS.

Albatross	Chelmer	Foam	Jed	Mallard
Angler	Colne	Garry	Kennet	Stag

CRUISERS ATTACHED TO BATTLE SQUADRON.

Barham	Diana	Medea
--------	-------	-------

## EASTERN FLEET.

CHINA SQUADRON.—CRUISER SQUADRON.

Defence	Flora	Kent	Minotaur ( <i>Flag</i> )	Monmouth	Newcastle
---------	-------	------	--------------------------	----------	-----------

ATTACHED SHIPS.

Alacrity	Bramble	Britomart	Cadmus	Clio	Thistle
----------	---------	-----------	--------	------	---------

RIVER GUNBOATS.

Kinsha	Nightingale	Sandpiper	Teal	Woodcock
Moorhen	Robin	Snipe	Widgeon	Woodlark

DESTROYERS.

Fame	Janus	Ribble	Virago	Whiting
Handy	Otter	Usk	Welland	

AUSTRALIAN SQUADRON.—CRUISERS.

Cambrian	Drake ( <i>Flag</i> )	†Pegasus	†Prometheus	Torch
Challenger	Encounter	Pioneer	Psyche	

EAST INDIES SQUADRON.—CRUISERS.

Fox	Highflyer ( <i>Flag</i> )	Perseus	Philomel	Proserpine
-----	---------------------------	---------	----------	------------

ATTACHED SHIPS.

Alert	Espiègle	Odin	Sphinx
-------	----------	------	--------

## CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

CRUISERS.

Forte	Hermes ( <i>Flag</i> )	Pandora
-------	------------------------	---------

## WEST COAST OF AMERICA

SLOOPS.

Algerine	Shearwater
----------	------------

## S.E. COAST OF AMERICA &amp; WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

CRUISERS.

Glasgow	Dwarf
---------	-------

---

† Detailed temporarily for service on China Station.

of most of the battleships of the British Navy in the North Sea and the English Channel. The fleets are being trained, in accordance with Nelson's maxim, in the waters in which they may fight—the waters in which under present international conditions a conflict is most possible, although, we may hope, not probable. This is not an argument, of course, for the abandonment of the Mediterranean: that is an imperial and trade route which any Admiralty would hold if it were given the necessary ships and men by the nation.

The widespread belief in our naval decadence is the initial difficulty in approaching the new naval situation. We must realise that pre-eminence on the seas to-day is not incompatible with danger in the future—and the immediate future. As a people we have not been unfaithful to our trust. We have responded to every challenge in the past. The challenges have been mainly in ships—some of which lie fathoms deep in Far Eastern waters. The new challenge is not in ships, but in sea power, ships always manned, victualled, stored and trained ready for action. We have known for four years that eventually Germany intended to attain an establishment of fifty-eight large armoured ships fit to be in the line. The new fact is that these ships—their number now increased to sixty-one—are to be translated into instantly ready sea-power: that the reserve vessels are to be moved into the fighting line and provided with crews. The High Sea Fleet is to be increased in hitting power by over 50 per cent. and it is to be maintained at this strength



ready at any selected moment to hit any other Fleet—the British Navy among others—at its average moment—it may be when it is least ready to hit back. This is the measure of Germany's new Naval Act and it is against this peril that the British people are bound to take precautionary measures.

Additional ships are to be built over and above the number specified in former Naval Acts, but the struggle of the future which will cast its shadow on the British Navy Estimates will be in men rather than material. Men are cheap in Germany: they are dear in the United Kingdom. The German naval authorities demand seamen by law and get them for three years at low—ridiculously low—rates of pay: the British naval authorities have to invite them and get them, on an average, for nearly ten years at exceedingly high rates of pay. The British seaman ought to be and is the better man, but he is very costly in comparison with the German conscript, though in relation to the cost of living and the wages in other walks of life his pay is low. Consequently the decision of the German Government to raise 15,000 additional men, increasing the total personnel from 65,000 to 80,000 in order to raise the effective strength of the standing Navy, held on the leash in the North Sea, must cast a heavy burden on the British Navy Estimates. At present we have 134,000 men; if we are to commission sufficient ships to retain anything approaching our present superiority and ensure an adequate margin of safety at our average moment, the personnel must be raised by 6,000 annually until it reaches

160,000 or 170,000. Only by such an expansion can we add the additional squadrons and flotillas to the sea-going fleet in a ratio corresponding to that authorised by the Reichstag.

The challenge of Germany consists in the raising of the standard of instant readiness for war—in short, in the necessity of enlisting about 30,000 more men for the British Fleet, with a due proportion of officers. The coming contest is not so much a struggle in material as in trained men. Material can be fashioned in haste: men must be trained at leisure and must be secured consequently several years before their services are required.

Years ago, in the early stage of German naval expansion, Sir Charles Dilke held that the German Navy was not intended to fight but to argue with—to support diplomacy. “A fleet of British line of battleships are the best negotiators in Europe.” We have held and practised this theory and now Germany has adopted it. The more closely one studies German foreign policy, the more one must be convinced that the great end in view is the power to dictate and only to fight in the very last resort. Even a successful war would be a defeat to Germany, because her highest interest now that she has become a great commercial nation, with her ships and cargoes in every sea, is peace. Germans—the old ruling classes in Germany—do not yet realise this change. But the fact remains. And the danger lies in this absence of the “modern eye” in the classes which largely dominate the exterior and interior policy of the Empire. They do not appre-

hend the cost even of victory—much less the ruin of defeat. German statesmen are beginning to realise the new point of view—which must be Germany's point of view in future years. But so far there has been no outward abandonment of the policy of "blood and iron," no moderation in the ideals of the Pan-Germans, no change in the policy of the Navy League and its associated societies. It is because these Chauvinistic ambitions are still predominant, and because they can be attained only by the threat of force—the shaking of the mailed fist—that Germany is adding to her armaments, in the confident hope that, with the backing of a supreme Army and a fleet of such strength that "even for the mightiest sea Power a war . . . would involve such risks as to jeopardise its own supremacy," she may carve out for herself "a place in the sun" by diplomacy and by the show—rather than the use—of force. We may be sure that no thinking German, who is conversant with Germany's economic and commercial position, desires war, but a very large section of Germans want the fruits of war without fighting. Hence the German Naval Amendment Act and the measure for adding to her land forces.

This is the new situation in Germany—a deep-seated conflict of interest and policy. This is not our business. The British peoples need not meddle in Germany's affairs; they will have as much as they can manage to look after their own well-being. First of all they must realise that *sea power is not merely a matter of building ships*. Men-of-war must be manned by trained officers and men and continually

practised at sea, and this to us is the most costly aspect of naval preparation. Naval warfare has reached something of the precision of a game of chess and an action—indeed the whole campaign—may be won or lost at the first move. Everything, it is now admitted, depends on readiness and promptness. These factors depend on an accurate disposition of the Fleet in times of peace so as to meet the needs of war : on the efficiency of the ships, together with the highest strategical speed, and above all, on the fighting efficiency of the officers and men and their familiarity—from the admirals downwards—with all the exacting demands war may make on them. In this respect the conditions have changed. Formerly, as has been observed by senior officers, no one was ready, no navy had permanent crews, and there was always time after the diplomatist had spoken the last word to prepare for war owing to the slowness with which the first moves were made. To-day the diplomatist may not have an opportunity of speaking the last word before the first blow is struck. This is the meaning of the new German Navy Act—ability to strike the first blow. Let it be remembered always that this Act is the supplement to the Act of 1900, in the preamble of which it was stated :

It is not absolutely necessary that the German Fleet should be as strong as that of the greatest sea Power because generally a great sea Power will not be in a position to concentrate all its forces against us.

The British Fleet has world-wide duties because the British Empire is world-wide. If our naval

strength is lowered, then an increased proportion must be stationed in the main strategical theatre to the danger of the outposts of the Empire, our mercantile marine and our trade, or we must accept as a fact full of peril, that we cannot concentrate adequate forces in the main strategical theatre.

Under the German Navy Act of 1900, amended in 1906 and again in 1908 and always in the direction of greater material strength on the seas, the German naval establishment has been created and expanded, and in the latest Act a routine is set up in accordance with which the fleet will in future be held always prepared to go into action. The word "reserve" will have no meaning in the language of the German navy henceforth—all the ships are to be in commission either with full or nucleus crews, and in the task of preparation for war there will be not a moment's respite.

The British peoples in the Mother Country and in the dominions must realise, as the Foreign Secretary once remarked, that the British Navy is the common security of the whole Empire, and that if it ever fails to be that it will be no use for us to discuss any other subjects. Consequently the maintenance of the Navy in a position absolutely assuring its ability to win the command of the sea must be the first care not only of the people of the United Kingdom, but of the peoples of the United Empire.

We in the British Isles must keep ourselves free from entangling alliances in Europe, first because they would involve us in the military rivalries of

Continental Powers \* and deflect our policy from its normal course, and secondly because such alliances and their responsibilities would be an obstacle to closer Imperial federation. We must candidly recognise that the old narrow European policy must expand into the larger Imperial policy. We cannot look to Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, with their fresh outlook, their virgin vigour, and their new problems, to mix themselves up in the old jealousies and quarrels of the Continent of Europe, and this is what an alliance in Europe inevitably means.

The future of Empire—closer union between ourselves and our kinsmen and security—lies in a splendid isolation—friendly relations with all countries which will be friendly and alliance with none. This is the path of true Imperialism which will lead us forth in good time a union of peaceful and freedom-loving peoples—masters of our own destinies, close partners one with the other, and having in our command the sea communications which link together the Five Nations.

Ambassadors may come and go, hands may be stretched across the North Sea in friendly greeting, but this fleet of Germany's—its unfaltering purpose ever in view—will remain. The German Reichstag—and not the German Ambassadors or the German people—passed the Navy Act and though statesmen

\* It is certain that an alliance with an European Power would force us eventually to maintain an army on the Continental scale, and that would involve the adoption of a system of conscription to the injury of the Navy, of our Expeditionary Force and of our Army in India, Egypt, and South Africa.



and ambassadors may speak fair words, and the British and German peoples may become as brothers, those squadrons and flotillas will remain on duty until the Reichstag relieves them of their trust and their responsibility—of the character and extent of which the world is still in ignorance.

Europe is suffering from the old disease of nations—jealousy, envy and all uncharitableness—and one of the outward symptoms is the piling up of armaments in which Germany, with unofficial, but very real ambitions, leads the way. We must eradicate the disease, before the symptoms will disappear. If we, under the British flag, deploring the disease and its results, attempt, alone among the peoples, to reverse the process of cure, we shall merely produce the temporary appearance of health in our own body politic, with the certainty of eventual catastrophe to all we hold dear.

# GERMAN NAVAL PROGRESS.

---

## ACT OF 1898.

- 1 Fleet flagship
- 2 Squadrons, each of eight battleships, the largest under construction displacing 10,614 tons
- 6 Large cruisers, the largest displacing 10,650 tons, and mounting four 9.4 in. guns
- 16 Small cruisers
- = 17 Ships of the line

## ACT OF 1912.

- 1 Fleet flagship
- 5 Squadrons, each of eight battleships, the largest under construction displacing 24,100 tons
- 12 Large cruisers, the largest displacing 22,600 tons, and mounting ten 12 in. guns
- 30 Small cruisers
- = 53 Ships of the line

## RESERVE.

- 3 Battleships
- 3 Large cruisers
- 3 Small cruisers

The strength of the Reserve is unspecified, but, of course, the older ships of war value will be retained.

## FOREIGN SERVICE.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 3 Large cruisers of medium size and power | 8 Large cruisers, eventually to be swift battleships |
| 10 Small cruisers                         | 10 Small cruisers                                    |

Of the eight large cruisers for Foreign Service, four will constitute a "flying squadron" for use at home or abroad as required, and two others will remain in the North Sea—"in reserve." Thus, on occasion, Germany will be able to count on six more capital ships in her home waters, raising the total to 59. Two of the small foreign cruisers will also be at home—in ordinary.

## TORPEDO CRAFT.

Destroyers, 72  
Submarines, none

Destroyers, 144  
Submarines, 72

## TOTAL OF PERSONNEL.

1898—30,000

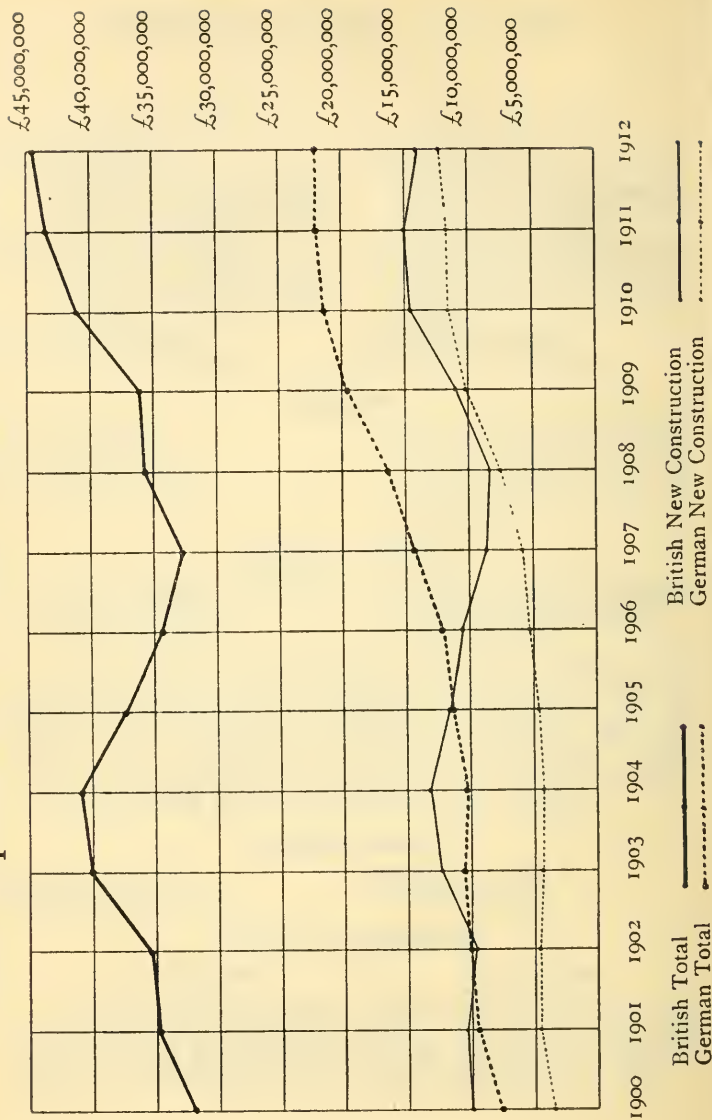
1912—80,000

Two Divisions of COAST DEFENCE SHIPS were included in the fleet organization of 1898; these ships have since been refitted and are still on the active list, although they are not included in the fleet organization of 1912.





# Naval Expenditure of Great Britain and Germany



# Naval Expenditure of Great Britain and Germany.

(In Million £'s).

GERMANY.				BRITAIN.		
	Total	New Construction		Total	New Construction	
1900	... 7'6	3'4	...	32'0	10'0	
1901	... 9'5	4'7	...	34'9	10'3	
1902	... 10'0	4'7	...	35'2	9'8	
1903	... 10'4	4'4	...	40'0	12'4	
1904	... 10'1	4'3	...	41'0	13'2	
1905	... 11'3	4'7	...	37'2	11'4	
1906	... 12'0	5'2	...	34'6	10'5	
1907	... 14'2	5'9	...	32'7	8'8	
1908	... 16'5	7'8	...	35'5	8'5	
1909	... 19'7	10'2	...	36'0	11'0	
1910	... 21'2	11'4	...	41'0	14'7	
1911	... 22'0	11'7	...	43'3	15'0	
1912	... 22'0	12'2	...	44'6	14'0	
Increase per cent. in 1912 over 1900	197'1	260'0	...	39'3	40'0	

## The guide to expansion is the expenditure on new ships.

It will be noted that between the years 1905 and 1909, British expenditure on the Navy showed an aggregate decline (compared with 1904) of roughly £31,000,000, and in the same period German expenditure increased by over £23,000,000. This was Germany's response to the British Government's challenge to naval economy.

If the German Navy were organised on the basis of voluntary service, and if the German Estimates included all the items comprised in the British Estimates, they would be about nine millions higher than they are. Therefore the comparable totals in 1912 are really: Germany, £31,000,000; Great Britain, £44,600,000.



## CHAPTER I

### THE NEW GERMAN NAVY ACT.

**B**Y her new Naval Law Amendment Act, Germany is directly, definitely, and deliberately challenging our traditional claim to possess such a fleet as will ensure our naval supremacy afloat as a counterpoise to our military weakness ashore.\* We are an island people, the builders and guardians of an Empire linked together by the seas. To us sea power is a necessity because by the sea we live, move, and have our being; to the Germans, supreme as a military nation, and possessing no comparable Imperial responsibilities, sea power is a luxury, as the first thirty years' history of the German Empire attests.

The truth is that, while to us naval strength is an end in itself—a natural expression of our one essential need—to Germany it is merely a means to an end, and that end—if the Pan-Germans may be believed—is the destruction of the British Empire, the disruption of the French Republic, and the domination of the world.

Let there be no mistake—Germany aims high; the stakes for which she is competing are the greatest

\* A section of powerful politicians and vested interests, with the support of the Emperor and the Marine Amt, under Grand-Admiral von Tirpitz, have obtained control of the Government and the most influential newspapers, and dominate German policy.

## 2 THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

any nation has sought to obtain since Napoleon strode the Continent. At a colossal cost—heavy taxation on luxuries and necessities alike and heavy debt\*—she is pressing forward in this race in armaments, confident that she is now entering on the last lap. She has mortgaged so much in the contest that either she must achieve victory abroad or meet the storm of strife which her policy has and is still creating at home. The ruling Germans realise that this is the last lap in the race—the crucial test of endurance ; either we or they must fail in the silent, bloodless war, and fail soon.

Can it be said that the British people have any conception of the peril which threatens them—of the fact that within four hundred miles of these shores a fleet is about to be placed on a war-footing—momentarily ready to strike—greater than the strongest fleet which we have maintained in the past ; we with our prestige, our sea traditions, and, above all, our sea needs ? We have never had in home waters such a powerful, ever-menacing engine of war as Germany proposes to set up within about a day's steaming of the mouth of the Thames.

This is the new situation, and a Sabbath calm reigns over the United Kingdom as though the millennium had dawned, as though the Krupp works, with their thousands of workmen, were busy fashioning swords into ploughshares and gun-turrets into bathing-machines, as though the great ship-building yards of Germany were engaged in building

\* Germany has created debt amounting to nearly £38,000,000 for the Navy since 1900.

racing yachts, and as though the officers and men in the German ships of war in the North Sea were peaceful fishermen plying their craft in patient, honest, harmless industry.

There is still a belief in England that ships are synonymous with sea power, and that as we have the ships therefore there is no danger. This is an error of nations in the nursery age of civilisation. It is the mistake which the Russians made, and for which they paid. The Germans have got beyond this stage. They know that ships must have crews, coal, ammunition, and stores ; that they must be always under training if the highest standard of war efficiency is to be obtained. We have hitherto been content to keep about half our fleet on a war footing—that is, fully manned—and until recently the remainder lay more or less neglected in the dockyards, so sure were we that we should have warning before war, and that then the final preparations could be completed. The Germans are setting up a new standard of efficiency ; a standing fleet in the North Sea and Baltic—one for strategical purposes—is being quietly and silently created, greater even than the standing fleet we have maintained in our home waters in the past.

It is apparent that the significance of the action which is about to be taken by the naval authorities in Germany, now that the Reichstag's formal approval has been received, is not understood in this country. It is generally assumed that the German proposals will merely entail upon this country the construction of two or three additional Dreadnoughts, a



couple of small cruisers, and some more submarines in the next six years. This is an entire misapprehension—a delusion dangerous in the extreme. The German scheme does involve some increase in naval construction, particularly in the matter of submarines; but the provisions of the new Bill which are of real importance, and which will cast a heavy shadow over the British Navy Estimates during the next six or seven years, are those which aim at a higher standard of fleet efficiency in the North Sea than any Power in its wildest dreams has ever attempted to achieve. Now that the new German Navy Bill has passed, the British people must face an alarming and permanent growth in naval expenditure in order that the necessary measures may be taken to protect British interests in face of this renewed challenge—not merely in ships—inanimate skeletons—but in actual naval power—ships manned and trained to the highest pitch of efficiency and stationed within four hundred miles of our shores.

The essential point to be borne in mind is that whereas in the past the increased charges borne by the British taxpayers have been mainly confined to the building of new ships, which we buy in the cheapest market, the burden which will have to be borne in future years will consist largely of the outlay entailed by the necessity of keeping a larger portion of our fleet upon a war footing and instantly ready for any eventualities. This will involve not only a great increase in the *personnel*—in the number of officers and men, whom we buy in the dearest

market owing to our voluntary system—but will also necessitate heavy additional expenditure upon coal, ammunition, and stores, an expenditure which will raise the Navy Estimates in the next few years to a figure unprecedented in our experience.

### I. GERMANY'S EXPANSIVE LAW.

In order to apprehend the gravity of the naval crisis which lies ahead, it is necessary to recall the steps by which Germany has succeeded in attaining her present position of naval predominance among the Continental Powers without a corresponding appreciation in other countries—and particularly in the United Kingdom—of the cumulative effect of her acts. British methods of government are so haphazard, illogical and unscientific—so uncrafty, so simple, so straightforward—that the people of the British Empire cannot understand what is usually described as the logical and methodical system of the Germans. What proportion of the British people, for instance, realises that under “the fixed and immutable law,” to which Germans point with pride as an indication of their superiority to the transient policies of other countries, the establishment of seventeen battleships fixed by statute in 1898 has grown to an establishment of fifty-eight battleships, and that even this establishment is now about to be raised to sixty-one?—all in accordance with a fixed and immutable law which, as Germans boast, and with reason from their point of view, is so much superior to the yearly programmes of the British Admiralty. Every year the British

authorities bring forward a shipbuilding programme, which is examined and discussed in every country ; if it represents increased activity, then Great Britain is charged with nursing some sinister design, and further shipbuilding for this or that fleet is urged upon this or that Government ; if it represents less activity, then it is a sign that Great Britain is reaching the end of her resources in ships or men, and it is urged that this is the opportunity of striking the trident from Britannia's grasp.

How much better the " fixed and immutable law " of Germany ! It is the custom to refer to *the* Naval Law as though it was passed in 1870 and had never been changed—a moss-grown political instrument. The law represents, it is true, a notable expression of policy, but it is expansive. The procedure is very simple. A Navy Law is passed, as, for instance, the first of 1898, covering a number of years, specifying the number of ships that shall be laid down during the period and their general types, but not tying the hands of the naval authorities as to the characteristics of those ships. Under the law an old vessel with armour on her sides carrying a few weak guns, such as the ships of the Hagen type, is called " a battleship," even though she displaces only 4,000 tons, and the same description covers a new vessel of 25,000 tons with ten 12-inch guns. And under the law the latter displaces the former ; and of course there is no deception : it is all a matter of degree. Similarly a battleship of 27,000 tons, with eight 12-inch guns and a speed of about 28 knots, though she is far more heavily armoured than

the Hagen class, is not a battleship, but a cruiser—an armoured cruiser. It is apparent that a law of this kind affords an excellent means of hoodwinking others. It is discussed abroad in the light of the official explanations made at the time of its introduction, and it is carried into effect in the light of official explanations which are never made in public. Obsolete ships, must, of course, be replaced by modern vessels, but, in Germany, for a ship of 4,000 tons is substituted a Dreadnought of 25,000 tons and 22 knots—a battleship; a cruiser of negligible value has her place taken in the fleet by a Dreadnought of 28 knots—a battle cruiser; and thus a vast fleet is created behind the convenient screen of an innocent-looking Naval Law. It is all so methodical in appearance, and yet so haphazard and opportunist in execution, that it lulls suspicion abroad, while it tickles and amuses those of the population at home who understand the game and appreciate the stakes.

If it is suggested to an instructed German that his nation is forcing the pace in naval construction, he assumes a hurt expression and asks how that can be when Germany has her fixed standard laid down by statute, which all the world may read. He does not add that the Navy Law is merely an expanding standard of measurement, like a tape measure made of rubber, on which the nomenclature of ships is ever changing, so that a cruiser to-day becomes a battleship to-morrow, and a gunboat is transformed into a Dreadnought of vast powers of offence and defence. He does not explain that even the finance is method-

## 8 THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

ically unmethodical, that some of the outlay is met out of revenue and some by loans, and that the cost of the fleet's backdoor—the Kiel Canal—and the outlay on the pensions of officers and men and other services are not borne on the Navy Votes, but are to be found among the civil expenditure. Man never invented a more remarkable law than that of Germany, which nominally regulates her naval expansion and in accordance with which the standard of strength is seventeen battleships in 1898, while the same naval standard is sixty-one battleships in the present year. It is a conjuring trick in the political field which must win admiration.

This movement in Germany can best be appreciated perhaps by recalling step by step the naval legislation which has been adopted by the Reichstag in the past fourteen years. The first Navy Act, passed in 1898, made provision for an establishment of only seventeen battleships. Since at that moment Germany had built and building men-of-war, small in number and of negligible power in contrast with the contemporary ships of the great naval Powers, this seemed a great development in strength, but no such a development as to occasion any uneasiness in other countries. The Act was to have run for six years: it was superseded in two years by another measure which was to have run for seventeen years, but which was amended in six years, again amended in two years, and has again been amended this year. This is what is called the fixed and immutable naval law of Germany.

But that is not all. The significance of all these

various changes in the German programmes can be appreciated only if we summarise the establishment fixed under the successive measures. In briefest detail, the upward movement has been as follows :

ACT.	ESTABLISHMENT OF SHIPS ADOPTED.					
	Battleships.			Armoured Cruisers.		
1898	..	..	17	..	..	8
1900	..	..	38	..	..	14
1906	..	..	38	..	..	20
DREADNOUGHTS.						
1908	..	..	..	..	58	
1912	..	..	..	..	61*	

Germany proposes to set up a naval establishment which will comprise no fewer than sixty-one battleships less than twenty years old. This is a larger establishment than the British Navy has ever had in the past, and exceeds the establishment of any other two European navies.

The stages by which this new standard has been reached have been planned with such apparent ingenuousness that even to-day the significance of the movement is not appreciated by some of the closest observers of German politics. An illustration of this was afforded by the *Spectator* of March 30th, 1912, in which an interesting article signed "R. C. L.," and evidently from the pen of Mr. R. C. Long, appeared upon "Political Education in Germany." The writer reviewed in brief terms the remarkable

\* The newest German battleship of 1898 was a ship of 10,614 tons, with four 9·4 in. guns, and a speed of 17 or 18 knots ; the battleship of 1912 is a vessel of from 25,000 to 27,000 tons, with eight or ten 12 in. guns, and a speed of 21 to 28 knots.



literature which had recently been published in Germany in support of the new Navy Bill, which we are so repeatedly assured is not aimed at England. He remarked :

Anyone who wants to see what Germans think, or what the armaments specialists hypnotise Germans into thinking, could do no better than order a bookseller to send him everything which appears on Anglo-German relations during a given month. He would be surprised at the amount and at the uniformly "educative" note. The writer, without making any special search, and no doubt missing many, came across the following publications, all issued at the time of, or within a month of Lord Haldane's visit :

*England's Weltherrschaft und die deutsche Luxusflotte, von "Look Out."*

*Deutschland sei Wach !* (published by the Navy League): *Die Kriegsbereitschaft der englischen Flotte im Jahre 1911*, von Alexander Graf von Gersdorff.

*John Bull und Wir*, von Dr. H. Heiderich.

*Ist England kriegslustig ?* von Ludwig Schreiner.

*Krieg oder Frieden mit England*, von Dr. Georg Hartmann.

*England und Wir*, von Dr. Paul Nathan.

*Deutschland und der Islam*, von Davis Trietsch.

*Das Perfide Albion*, von Principus Obsta.

*England und Deutschland* (an album of articles by Baron von Mackay, Rear-Admiral Stiege, "A Sea Officer," Prof. Dietrich Schaefer, Prof. Adolph Wagner, and others).

That is the output of "educative" literature of a mere four or five weeks. The only qualifications are that *Deutschland und der Islam* is not specially anti-English, and preaches only incidentally that a German-Ottoman



Alliance would make untenable England's world-position, and that *England und Wir* is by a professed Anglophile (a collaborator of the late Anglophile Dr. Barth), who exposes England's offences more in sorrow than in anger. But the general tendency of these works of education is the same. It is that Great Britain is determined to destroy Germany; that the way to meet the peril is to arm more strongly on sea and on land; and that the German public must be impressed with the peril, and must call for a patriotic policy should the Government fail in its patriotic duty.

The writer dealt specifically with the pamphlet by "Look Out." Commenting upon this publication, he said :

The pamphlet by "Look Out" is interesting for the data which it marshals against the belief that active ship-building does not improve Germany's position relatively towards England. "Look Out" is sure of the contrary. He calculates that in 1898 the German navy stood to the British in the relation 1 : 6.3; that in 1900 the disparity was only 1 : 4.8; in 1904, 1 : 3.5; in 1906, 1 : 2.9; in 1911, 1 : 2.5; and in 1912, 1 : 2.1; so that from being six times the stronger Great Britain is now only twice as strong (The figures on which this is based indicate official information. The Service papers say that "Look Out" is a distinguished admiral.) And "Look Out" is sure that, despite British assurances, the two to one standard is doomed. He foresees a time when Germany will possess sixty Dreadnoughts (thirty-eight only are provided by present legislation), and predicts that when that stage is reached England will not have either men or money to maintain the necessary 120.

These quotations are of interest as a reminder of

the widespread propaganda against England which is now being carried on throughout the German Empire, but they also offer an opportunity of correcting the error of so well-informed a writer as Mr. Long. Even he still believes that "thirty-eight (Dreadnoughts) only are provided by present legislation." The fact is that the German signing himself "Look Out" is strictly accurate. Under the new Naval Act a standard of fifty-eight Dreadnoughts is set up; in the next six years it is proposed to build and complete two additional ships, raising the standard to sixty; and legislative authority has been given for the provision of an additional Dreadnought while postponing its construction until a later period. Owing to the methods adopted by the German naval authorities, a failure to appreciate the significance of their act is readily excusable. The story which lies behind this establishment of sixty-one battleships can be summarised in a few words:

Between 1897 and 1904 Great Britain laid down twenty-seven battleships and thirty-eight armoured cruisers, a total of sixty-two armoured ships in eight years, or an average of 7.75 ships a year.

In this period Germany built sixteen battleships and five armoured cruisers, or twenty-one armoured ships, equal to an average of 2.62 ships a year.

In 1905 the Admiralty determined to cease building armoured cruisers. In that year we laid down four "capital ships"—all of them

Dreadnoughts—in the next two years three annually, and 1908 two ships only.

This was Germany's opportunity. While we abandoned the building of armoured cruisers, she decided to accelerate her battleship construction, and she also decided that all the armoured cruisers specified in her law should be Dreadnoughts, and thus from thirty-eight battleships and twenty armoured cruisers she rose to an establishment of fifty-eight battleships, and now this is about to be increased to sixty-one.

The British people do not yet understand the working of this "fixed and immutable" naval law, which changes repeatedly, and always at a time when our Government is working for Anglo-German friendship. During the past twelve months or so, while organisations in the United Kingdom have been preaching amity with Germany, more powerful organisations in the German Empire have been preaching enmity to England in order "to get up steam" for the new Defence Bills.

If the two keels to one standard is to be adopted in this country we must build up to an establishment of 122 Dreadnoughts, and on the standard set up by the Admiralty, as announced already by Mr. Churchill, we must be prepared to adopt an establishment of 103 in Dreadnoughts and a higher standard in cruisers and torpedo craft.

The First Lord of the Admiralty has announced how the new emergency will be met. In introducing the Estimates to the House of Commons on March 18th, 1912, Mr. Churchill said:

The time has come for us to readjust our standard in closer accord with actual facts and probable contingencies. The actual standard of new construction which the Admiralty has in fact followed during recent years has been to develop a 60 per cent. superiority in vessels of the Dreadnought type over the German Navy on the basis of the existing fleet law. . . . If Germany were to adhere to her existing law we believe that that standard would, in the absence of any unexpected developments in other countries, continue to be a convenient guide for the next four or five years, so far as this capital class of vessel is concerned. I must not, however, be taken as agreeing that the ratio of 16 to 10 could be regarded as a sufficient preponderance for British naval strength as a whole above that of the next strongest naval Power.

Mr. Churchill then went on to explain how he proposed to apply the new standard contemplated in place of the Two Power Standard. He said :

Applying the standard I have outlined to the House—that is to say, two ships a year for the next six years—because that is what the law prescribes—applying this standard of 60 per cent. to the existing German Navy Law, and guarding ourselves very carefully against developments in other countries which cannot now be foreseen, it would appear to be necessary to construct for the next six years four ships and three ships alternately, beginning this year with four. That is the least which will maintain—it is a little above the 60 per cent. standard, it is really over 17 ships to 10—but that is the least that will maintain the 60 per cent. standard. That is what we had in our minds when we framed the Estimates now presented to the House of Commons.

If we are now, as it would seem to be, and I fear it is certain, if we are now to be confronted with an addition of two ships to the German construction in the next six years—two Dreadnoughts—two ships spread over the six years, we should propose to meet that addition on a higher ratio of superiority (Opposition cheers) by laying down four ships in the same period, spreading them, however, conveniently over the six years so as to secure the greatest evenness in our finances. If we are confronted with three ships additional we should lay down six over those years, and the forecast of new construction which I now make under all reserve would become four, beginning with this year—four, five; four, four; four, four; as against the German construction of—two, three; two, two; and three, two. Alternatively, if three were laid down by Germany in the six years our construction would become five, four; five, four; and five, four, an alternation of fives and fours, as against the German alternation of threes and twos.

Even if the country adheres to the comparatively modest margin of safety which commends itself to Mr. Churchill and his colleagues of the Admiralty, the burden which will be cast upon the country will become extremely onerous, since we must be prepared to lay down in the next six years twenty-five or twenty-seven \* large armoured ships, each costing two millions, thus spending upon these vessels alone, apart from cruisers and torpedo craft, a matter

\* The exact number depends upon whether Germany lays down two or three Dreadnoughts in the next six years above the provision of the former Navy Law. The New Law specifically provides only for two of the ships, while including 3 in the establishment.

of fifty to fifty-four millions sterling. Unfortunately, the main increase in German activity is to be in submarines. These craft cost about £80,000 each. Germany intends to create flotillas in the North Sea and the Baltic, which for all strategical purposes will in the course of a year or two be one, numbering upwards of seventy craft. This means that during the next six years the British authorities will be compelled to build a far greater number of these under-water vessels, while at the same time continuing to lay down each year not less than twenty torpedo boat destroyers, a batch of cruisers to act as scouts for the battle fleet and commerce protectors, and a large number of auxiliary ships.

Unhappily, this recital of the prospective expenditure upon new construction is less than half the story that must be told, and the less serious. The importance, and the significance, and the threatening character of the new Navy Bill lie in those clauses which foreshadow an increase in the standing German Fleet by fifty per cent. with a growth in the German *personnel* from its present figure of about 65,000 to approximately 80,000 officers and men. This will hit us hard and cost us heavily, as the Germans know.

Down to a comparatively recent period the British Fleet was organised on the most economical lines. Until 1902 a comparatively small force of armoured ships was kept in full sea-going commission, and the remainder were in the Fleet or Dockyard Reserve, unmanned and capable of being dispatched to sea only after an interval devoted to overhaul and repairs. It was calculated that there would be a



period of several weeks between strained relations and war, and that during that time a Royal proclamation would place a large number of reservists at the disposal of the naval authorities, and thus in ample time for war, if war proved inevitable, the whole effective Navy would be placed upon a war footing. Germany rendered this organisation obsolete and dangerous, and Lord Fisher was the first among British naval officers to recognise this.

## II. THE FLEET RE-ORGANISATION OF 1905.

It was Mr. Winston Churchill's good fortune to go to the Admiralty when the foundations of a new Navy had been laid by successive Boards of Admiralty under the inspiring genius of Lord Fisher of Kilverstone. When this officer became First Sea Lord in the autumn of 1904, he at once began to set the Navy in order, so that it might respond to the new conditions created by the development of the German Fleet. Until then the naval defence scheme of the Empire had been pivoted on the Mediterranean. In the North Sea hardly a warship had been seen ; while quite a secondary force was maintained in the English Channel. The balance of power had to undergo a complete reversal. The naval power of this country had to be shifted so as to coincide with the altered political and naval situation. British predominance in the Mediterranean was not abandoned, but plans were prepared so that British influence in future should be more in evidence in the North Sea and English Channel than it had been in the past.



In the spring of 1905 the traditional organisation of the British squadrons was abandoned in order to meet a new political situation. The changes had one end in view—the provision of an immense striking force ready for instant use. The plans of the Admiralty comprised :

- (1) The withdrawal from distant stations of all non-fighting ships—little cruisers, sloops, and old gunboats—vessels too weak to fight and too slow to run away from any probable enemy.
- (2) The reduction of the strength of certain distant squadrons in view of altered political circumstances since the existing disposition of ships was settled ; the North Pacific Squadron and the South Atlantic Squadron being abolished and the ships of the North American Squadron becoming a particular service squadron, used in peace time mainly for training cadets and boys.
- (3) The provision at the home ports of an efficient organisation to enable the ships on the War List in the Reserve to proceed to sea prepared in all respects for war immediately the Admiralty issued its orders. The officers and men withdrawn, as stated above, from distant squadrons were utilised as nucleus crews in the Reserve ships.
- (4) The reorganisation of the battle fleets in European waters, so as to coincide with the needs of the Empire in the face of the shifting of naval power from southern to northern waters.

An essential and dominating feature of this new scheme of British naval defence was the recall

of weak ships in distant waters—"death-traps" they were styled—the abandonment of certain squadrons the importance of which had decreased, and the "grouping" of the cruisers on foreign and Colonial stations on war lines. The officers and men set free by reduction in the number of small ships abroad and by the substitution of merchant sailors in some other non-fighting but essential ships—an army of ten or twelve thousand of all ranks—were utilised for further expanding the fighting forces at the strategical centre of the Empire. They enabled the Admiralty to make the best possible use of our reserves—ships in ordinary. In recent years improvements had been made in naval organisation, but the difficulty had been to secure an adequate number of officers and men to maintain those men-of-war at the home ports when not actually under repair in a condition for immediate sea service. By the withdrawal of non-fighting ships from the seas and a reorganisation of the coastguard service—a force then comprising nearly 4,000 highly trained men—this defect was remedied.

The idea was that officers and skilled men—gunners, torpedoists, engine-room hands, &c.—should be assigned in peace time to all vessels on the "war list," and it was determined simultaneously that no obsolete vessels should be on this list; the effective vessels constituted the ships in commission with reduced crews. On an emergency the remainder of the complements would be immediately supplied.

By these changes the force of the blow which the British Navy could strike at once on the outbreak

of war was doubled, if not trebled, and this was effected not only without additional expenditure, but with immediate and substantial economies. "Concentrate" was the watchword of the Admiralty.

It had been the business of politicians in the past to utilise the years of peace in preparing for the millennium, and on the outbreak of war to rush into operations ill-prepared, and with wasteful outpourings of the national resources. Almost all British wars have begun with disaster. The Admiralty in 1905 and in subsequent years of further development outraged British traditions of defence by preparing, without a "by-your-leave" to Parliament, to meet a danger of which only the first shadowy outlines had been observed by the public: they locked the stable-door before the thief appeared, instead of waiting for the thief to do his work and then in hurried confusion set out to punish him. In the whole story of British defence, since Great Britain became a democratic country, the action of the Admiralty was without parallel. It had come to be recognised as an almost essential principle that the British nation should not prepare for the probable contingency of war for fear the action might hurt some one's susceptibilities; the Navy and Army, in all their unpreparedness, should remain unready, hold their breath, in fact, so as not to reveal their existence; then, if war should occur—well, it could be said that at least the British had not provoked it—and, after all, we usually "muddle through." In most naval engagements we have "muddled

through " because we have had the " biggest battalions "—have eventually secured superior power to throw at the enemy. That day had come to an end even when Lord Fisher went to the Admiralty. We were no longer one of two naval Powers of the first class, as was the case even as lately as twenty years before, but the British Fleet was one of seven great fleets. Rivals had arisen, and to hold what we had it was essential that we should organise to defend it. This the Admiralty did.

There was no solid foundation for the reiterated statement at that time that Germany sought to embroil herself in war with this country—nothing more than a widespread suspicion—but her naval policy had given every excuse for such measures of precaution as the Admiralty took. There was a case for preparation not in view of the prospect of probable hostilities in the near future, but because the German Fleet was being increased so swiftly as to excuse, at any rate, the belief that it might be used as a political instrument or might serve in case of our complication with some other country or countries as tongs wherewith to pull chestnuts out of the fire for the benefit of Germany. A neutral Power can use a fleet with good effect—without striking a blow—against a nation weakened by war, even though that nation be victorious, as was Japan in 1895. It is possible to imagine circumstances in which the silent pressure of a strong German Navy could compel concessions; it might be merely consent to some line of action, such as the assertion of undue influence over a neutral neighbour, the

seizure of a coaling-station here or there, or the shifting of some boundary. A nation well armed, as it was even then realised by the Admiralty that Germany would be, might effect its purpose without firing a gun or running a single torpedo. The preparations of the British Admiralty indicated not a shadow of animosity for the German nation. It was admitted that Germany had a right in view of her growing mercantile marine to a more considerable Fleet than she had possessed in the past, but the fact that this Fleet was increasing out of all proportion to the extent of the Empire's merchant shipping, its oversea trade, and its colonial possessions—expensive luxuries enough already—did compel other Powers to take precautionary measures while at the same time remaining on friendly terms. British statesmen could not overlook the fact that in the preamble to the Navy Act of 1900 it was stated that "Germany must have a Fleet of such strength that a war, even against the mightiest naval Power, would involve such risks as to threaten the supremacy of that Power." Great Britain as "the mightiest naval Power," was interested in such an assertion of policy. The Kaiser had also told the world that Germany's "future lies on the sea," and at another time claimed that he was "Admiral of the Atlantic." These actions and words have been responsible for the feelings entertained by many Englishmen. We did not ignore the growth of the French Navy in the late 'eighties, and one reason why we are good friends with the French Government to-day is that we showed that we had backbone and that

we realised our inheritance and the duty that it cast upon us—that we were not, in fact, one of the late Lord Salisbury's "waning nations." Again we were faced in 1905 by naval aggrandisement by a neighbour, and again the Admiralty took the necessary steps, not with a view to war, but to safeguard our position.

From 1905, when the reform movement began, down to the date of Lord Fisher's retirement, the work of reorganising the whole naval administration ashore and afloat was continued with restless energy, with the support of Mr. Balfour, both when in office and afterwards when in opposition. In the light of the new naval crisis created by Germany's renewed naval competition, it is not inappropriate to recall Mr. Balfour's estimate of one phase of the naval reform movement. Speaking at Glasgow on January 12th, 1905, he said:

I do not think that as yet public opinion has thoroughly realised either the magnitude or the importance of the change which Lord Selborne and his Board of Admiralty have recently effected in the constitution and arrangements of the British Fleet. At first sight, perhaps, a critic looking over the figures might say, "What has this Government been doing?" They have abolished 130 vessels—my figures are not exact, I speak from memory—130 vessels no longer figure upon the list of the British Navy. They have in so doing made an economy. They have not weakened the Navy in the process for the mere sake of saving so many hundreds of thousands or millions a year, for they have not sacrificed the strength of the force on which the very being of this country depends. (A Voice: "Good riddance to bad rubbish.") That brief interruption puts even



more concisely and pithily than I can do one of the aspects, but only one of the aspects, of the great reform.

It is not merely that the Board of Admiralty have laid down the rule that a ship, however useful in time of peace—and we have to do, it must be admitted, a great deal of small police work in a time of peace, for diplomatic or other purposes—is not only useless, but worse than useless, in time of war if it possesses neither fighting power nor speed. It is merely a ship which exists to embarrass British admirals and to discredit the British flag. Well, with one courageous stroke of the pen, as it were, these ships have been removed. The cost of their maintenance, the cost of their repairs—I won't give you the figure to which it comes, it is a very big one—are all struck off the annual estimates.

But we have done, or I ought to say, the Board of Admiralty have done, something much more than that. They have distributed the fighting ships of the Fleet in the best strategic manner to deal with any emergency at a moment's notice, and they have done something much more than that. They have so arranged matters that the ships in reserve are not ships, as it were, laid up waiting for a crew, which neither know the ship, nor its machinery, nor its guns, nor the individual peculiarities which make a ship and a machine so like a living and organised being.

The Board of Admiralty have realised that there is this wide difference between an army and a navy. So far as we, at least, are concerned in this country, it is impossible that, either in India or on these shores, the Army should be required at twenty-four hours' notice to come into hostile contact with any opposing force. But we have only got to throw our minds back to the first days of the Russo-Japanese War to see how short is the time which intervenes between strained relations and declaration of



war, and a maritime conflict on which the fate of nations may depend.

The Board of Admiralty have, therefore, started this new principle. On every one of the fighting ships of his Majesty which is not part of the sea-going fleets they have put a nucleus crew, and the nucleus crew consists of everything required to manage a ship, and to fight a ship, excepting only what may be described as the unskilled maritime labour required for the purpose. These nucleus crews take out their ship. They practise the guns of their ship; they are not liable to those inevitable breakdowns which people changing to new machinery for the first time always experience. They have over them an admiral, whose specific duty it is to see that these ships—manned only, I admit, by nucleus crews—are ready at a moment's notice to fight, and the result is—and they could fight, I believe, without any addition to them—that officers, stokers, and gunners, all the skilled members of the crew, are there, and they could work the ship as it is, and they have to practise the ship as it is.

The result of all these changes taken together is that I believe the fighting power of the British Fleet during the first twenty-four hours, let us say, of hostilities with a foreign Power have been augmented, not once nor twice, but threefold. I think myself that a great performance. I do not think its magnitude has been yet fully realised by the public, but as time goes on I think they will feel that of all the reforms that have taken place since the time of Nelson this is perhaps the biggest that has yet been made.

There is no statesman of our time who possesses Mr. Balfour's genius for exposition of policy, and this statement of his gave the public the first picture

of the immense task which the Admiralty began in 1905 and which successive Boards, with Lord Fisher still as First Sea Lord, continued.

In the first speech which he delivered after his appointment as First Lord, Mr. Winston Churchill, faced by a new crisis, hastened to pay his tribute to the work of the man who had laid the foundations upon which he was to build. "The service and the country," he remarked, at the Lord Mayor's Banquet on November 9th, 1911, "owe . . . a deep and lasting debt of gratitude to Lord Fisher of Kilverstone, the ablest naval administrator which this country has known, and now that the controversies which real reforms, and the animosities which a forceful personality often create, are passing away, we are beginning to enjoy the results of his great work without the friction which, perhaps inevitably, was attendant upon its inception."

In this way the foundations were laid of a reorganised scheme of defence and our supremacy was for the time saved. Thus the fighting strength of the Navy in home waters was at least doubled. This increase was effected at practically no cost to the country owing to the large economies which were simultaneously effected by the recall of non-fighting ships and by other reforms.

### III. GERMANY'S LAST CHALLENGE AND THE REPLY.

During these years of British naval reorganisation the progressive increase in the standing fleet of Germany attracted little or no attention outside the Admiralty. When the German Navy Act of 1900

was passed, the German Admiralty maintained in commission four first-class, two second-class, and two third-class battleships, a total of eight only. In 1905, on the eve of the passage of the amending Navy Act, the standing fleet of Germany consisted of ten battleships, ranging in displacement from 11,130 tons to 13,000 tons, half of them mounting nothing bigger than 9.4-inch guns, and half carrying 11-inch weapons. Associated with this battle fleet were two armoured cruisers of about 9,000 tons, six small cruisers, two tenders, and twenty torpedo boats. According to the latest issue of the *Taschenbuch der Kriegsflotten*, prepared in December last, the active section of the German Fleet is now organised as follows :

#### HIGH SEA FLEET

Fleet Flagship : " Deutschland."

#### FIRST BATTLE SQUADRON.

BATTLESHIPS :—" Ostfriesland," \* " Thuringen," \* " Helgoland," \* " Elsass," " Nassau," \* " Rheinland," \* " Posen," \* " Westfalen." \* Tender " Blitz," Tender " Hela."

#### SECOND BATTLE SQUADRON.

BATTLESHIPS :—" Preussen," " Schleswig-Holstein," " Pommern," " Hannover," " Hessen," " Schlesien," " Lothringen," " Braunschweig." Tender " Pfeil."

#### SCOUTING SHIPS.

First Group of Scouts :—Armoured Cruisers " Von der Tann," \* ; " Moltke " \* Protected Cruisers : " Mainz " ; " Dresden " ; " Kolberg."

\* These ships are Dreadnoughts, and by 1915 Germany will have twenty-three Dreadnoughts completed and in commission.

Second Group of Scouts.—Armoured Cruiser “Yorck.” Protected Cruisers, “Coln,” “Stettin.”

While the standing Fleet of Germany has thus been increased, the newer and most powerful ships have been moved from the Baltic into the North Sea, and there has been a great development of the torpedo and submarine flotillas in the North Sea. At present the forces in both the seas named can be concentrated only with difficulty and delay, but as soon as the enlargement of the Kiel Canal is finished the two squadrons will be capable of being as easily, rapidly, and secretly concentrated in the North Sea as the divisions of the British Fleet which are normally based on Portsmouth and Devonport can effect a meeting.

Having already made this stupendous step in the development of her standing fleet, Germany is about to go one step further. By increasing the *personnel* to 80,000 she intends to place upon a war footing, always instantly ready, a Third Squadron consisting of eight battleships, two battle-cruisers—in other words, swift Dreadnoughts—and six small cruisers as reconnaissance ships. When the new scheme is completed the German Empire will have always in full commission twenty-five battleships of the slower Dreadnought type, eight battleships of the swifter Invincible type, together with eighteen protected cruisers. Behind this Active Fleet will be a Reserve of sixteen battleships, four battle (or armoured) cruisers, and twelve small cruisers, with nucleus crews. Thus on a war footing the German Navy in home waters will include :

1 Fleet flagship.

5 squadrons of 8 battleships each.

12 battle (or armoured) cruisers.

30 smaller cruisers, besides 144 torpedo boat destroyers and 72 submarines.

The scheme is even more significant than these figures suggest. In the past, owing to the necessary arrangements under the three years' conscription law, about one-third of the crews in the ships of the standing fleet have gone ashore each autumn on their return to civil life, and their places have been taken by raw recruits.\* Thus the German Fleet from October to May has been practically demobilised. The British naval authorities could always count on this period of safety and comparative rest. Under the new Naval Bill this difficulty in organisation is to be removed. It is proposed to provide such a surplus of naval *personnel* as will enable the First and Second Squadrons to be maintained, winter and summer alike, upon a footing of instant readiness for war. Presumably the Third Squadron will be on the same status as the High Sea Fleet at present; in other words, it will apparently be utilised for the early training of recruits, and will thus be less efficient during the winter months, but will gradually increase in efficiency from May to October, and during the summer months Germany will have all her most effective ships instantly ready for any eventuality.

This development of the standing German Fleet in the North Sea and Baltic is the real menace of Germany to our naval supremacy, and Pan-Germans

\* Cf. Text of Naval Law Amendment Act, 1912.

make no secret of their belief that we shall be unable to secure the necessary number of recruits. This is an error. The Admiralty have no difficulty in obtaining as many boys and men for training for the Fleet as they require ; they are, indeed, in the happy position of being able to pick and choose. In spite of the increases during the past few years, it has fortunately not been necessary even to lower the educational and physical standards adopted when the number of recruits required annually was far smaller. There is no reason to anticipate that, in spite of the activity of trade, any difficulty will be found in obtaining whatever number of additional men may be necessary for Fleet expansion. The second point to which German naval enthusiasts have attached importance is that the German naval authorities buy their naval labour in the cheapest market owing to conscription, while the British Admiralty buys in the dearest market in Europe. The Admiralty have calculated that the difference in pay between the German and British Fleets now amounts to about three millions sterling annually, so cheap is the conscript, and, of course, as the *personnel* increases so this disproportion will increase. But the assurance may be accepted that even this will prove no bar to the maintenance of British sea-power. We may have ample confidence that when the situation develops, we shall be able to provide the ships, the men, and the money.

The Admiralty have already revealed their scheme for organising the British Fleet on a higher standard of efficiency so that it may be able at its average



moment to deal with any foreign fleet, and specifically with the German Fleet, at its selected moment. There must be a large increase of ships available in British waters because Germany intends to keep in home waters every one of her sixty-one Dreadnoughts except six which are for foreign service,\* thirty-two of her forty small cruisers, and all her 144 torpedo boats, and seventy-two submarines.

Seven years ago the Admiralty withdrew a number of ships from distant waters in order to strengthen the "home guard." In view of the new German proposals a further concentration is now being effected, and at the same time the number of ships in full commission is being increased. The Atlantic Fleet, raised in strength from six to eight battleships, has been recalled from its base at Gibraltar to home waters, and the battleships of the Mediterranean Fleet, instead of making Malta their headquarters, will in future be based upon Gibraltar, and their number will be eight instead of six, and a new cruiser squadron will be associated with them. Seven years ago we brought home our battleships from China, and now we are bringing our battleships in the Mediterranean nearer the strategical centre. It is a significant movement which cannot fail to impress the people of the United Kingdom with the serious view which the authorities take of the naval situation, and it must surely occasion grave misgivings in distant parts of the Empire as to whether

\* Four of these—eventually to be Dreadnoughts—will form a "flying squadron," and may be in home waters at Germany's "selected moment."



the moment has not come when they should take a hand in defending British interests by direct and large contributions—not in men, for we have a surplus of population, but in ships and money.

Under the new scheme the British Fleet will be organised as follows : \*

#### FIRST FLEET.

##### *With Full Crews.*

Thirty-two Battleships and a Fleet Flagship.

First, Second, and Third Battle Squadrons with the First, Second, and Third Cruiser Squadrons, the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Destroyer Flotillas and auxiliaries. Bases : Home Ports.

Fourth Battle Squadron (removed from Malta) with the Fourth Cruiser Squadron to be subsequently formed. (This last force will be held available to co-operate in home waters or in the Mediterranean as circumstances may dictate.) Base : Gibraltar.

\* The First Lord of the Admiralty has explained that the scheme will be gradually carried out as circumstances dictate, and ships and men are available. For the present the Fourth Squadron will consist of only four battleships, and the Sixth Squadron is unformed. Upon the "King George V," "Centurion," and "Ajax," joining the Second Battle Squadron during the early part of 1913, the "Lord Nelson," "Agamemnon," and "Dreadnought," will transfer to the Fourth Squadron. These with the "Albemarle," will complete its strength. The arrival in the Fleet of the "Audacious" in the autumn of 1913, and of the "Iron Duke," "Marlborough," "Benbow," and "Delhi," in 1914-15, will move the five Duncans from the Fourth to the Sixth Squadron. The ships of this year's programme will, when ready, cause a movement of other vessels which will complete the Sixth Squadron early in 1915. The Eighth Battle Squadron, which has been re-inforced by the "Swiftsure" and "Triumph," is already complete. In the spring of 1915, the first three battle squadrons will consist exclusively of Dreadnoughts.

## SECOND FLEET.

*With Nucleus Crews.*

Sixteen Battleships.

Fifth and Sixth Battle Squadrons with the Fifth and Sixth Cruiser Squadrons and Torpedo Craft. (For these ships the necessary officers and men to complete their crews to full strength will be stationed at the local training establishments, so that they can go on board at a moment's notice. The Admiralty have announced that the movements of this fleet will be so arranged that one of its battle squadrons will always be present in its home port, and consequently one will always be ready to move as soon as steam can be raised.) Bases: Home Ports.

## THIRD FLEET.

*With Reduced Nucleus Crews.*

Sixteen Battleships.

Seventh and Eighth Battle Squadrons with the Seventh, Eighth and three other Cruiser Squadrons and Torpedo Craft. (The Eighth Squadron will be composed of the oldest ships still of war value—England's last hope. In order that the Seventh Battle Squadron and the Seventh Cruiser Squadron may be speedily raised to full war strength, a special reserve—to be called "The Immediate Reserve"—of ex-naval men is to be formed.) Bases: Home Ports.

## COASTAL DEFENCE.

A new officer, under the direct orders of the Admiralty, called the Admiral of Patrols, has charge of the four nucleus crew flotillas of torpedo boat destroyers and six flotillas of submarines for duty on the coasts.

## TRAINING SQUADRON.

Six Armoured Cruisers constitute the Training Squadron.

## FOREIGN SERVICE SHIPS.

A Cruiser Squadron with a number of protected cruisers, destroyers, and submarines will be based on Malta, and the other foreign squadrons will be maintained.

This is the new scheme of naval organisation, and it spells money—vastly increased Estimates. In summary it involves the following additions to our present fully-manned force :

An additional battleship as flagship of the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleets.

Two more battleships for the Atlantic Fleet, which has been brought into home waters to join the First Fleet of the Home Fleets.

Two more battleships, which are to be added to the strength of six battleships hitherto in the Mediterranean, which will in future be based on Gibraltar, becoming the "Pivot Force."

A new cruiser squadron of armoured cruisers which will be associated with the augmented squadron of battleships at Gibraltar.

Besides these additions to the active fleets of the British Navy in home waters :

The nucleus crew ships will be increased in number as more modern vessels become available, and these will form the Second and Third Fleets of four battle squadrons, with associated cruiser squadrons.

This expansion of the British naval forces will

mean thousands more men, thousands of tons more coal, thousands of gallons more oil, more food, more ammunition, and more general stores. It takes five or six years to produce a trained man, and therefore the additional men required five or six years hence must be entered almost immediately; we must begin working up to a higher scale of efficiency at once. Fortunately, it will be a gradual expansion, but of its inevitability and of its cost there is no doubt. Every naval charge must be increased—increased to an alarming extent.

In fullness of time this new scheme will give us *25 battleships fully commissioned, and 16 with nucleus crews in home waters, vis-à-vis to exactly the same number, in more or less the same condition of manning, in the German Fleet.\** We shall have, in addition, 16 older battleships of the Third Fleet, without fighting crews, and the Fourth Squadron of the First Fleet, which, the First Lord has stated, “will, from its strategic position at Gibraltar, be able to give immediate assistance in home waters or in the Mediterranean, should naval combinations in that area render its presence necessary or useful.” In other words, we shall have in commissioned ships, at our average moment, numerical equality with Germany in Northern waters, and inferiority to the Mediterranean Powers in Southern waters.

Within a short period of the outbreak of hostilities, as the reserve force—the Third Fleet—is tuned up to fighting strength, the Admiralty may be in a position to send a considerable naval force

\* Cf. Chapter II.

into the Mediterranean again.\* This is the best that can be hoped for. So long as peace lasts and our reserve resources are undeveloped—reserve resources which are, it is true, greater at present than those of any other country in the world—the best ships of the Fleet must be maintained at the strategical centre, and then, when war comes, if come it must, the naval organisation can be re-adjusted in the light of existing facts, and if ships and men in sufficient numbers are available a battle force can once more be based upon Malta. The fact that this island is to remain the headquarters of a large force of cruisers carries with it a guarantee that the efficiency of the dockyard will be maintained. But let there be no mistake. British prestige in the Mediterranean by the withdrawal of the battleships from Malta to Gibraltar is being lowered.

This in brief summary is the naval situation which we have to face, and it will be admitted that the Admiralty's scheme is modest in its scope compared with Germany's plans. We must build more armoured ships than it was intended to build; a batch of protected cruisers to take the place of older ships which are now becoming obsolete must be put in hand each year; we must continue to lay down a complete flotilla of destroyers annually, and the output of submarines must be increased. These are solid demonstrable facts. But the greatest

\* At an outlay of about one and a half—including an annuity to replace the capital cost of the ships—we could continue to keep eight battleships based on Malta.

part of the burden which the new German Law will cast upon us is due to the inevitable increase in the number of officers and men, and all that they connote, so as to augment the striking force *vis-à-vis* to the striking force held always ready within four hundred miles of our shores. We are on the eve of a real, continuing, and cumulative naval crisis which will test our character as a people, our finances as a State, and our industrial resources as a manufacturing community.

# THE POSITION IN DREADNOUGHTS.

GREAT BRITAIN—35.

GERMANY—23.

Name.	Date laid down or ordered.	Date launched.	Date completed.	Name.	Date ordered.	Date launched.	Date commissioned for trials.
<b>BATTLESHIPS :—</b>							
Dreadnought	Oct. 2, '05	Feb. 10, '06	Dec., '06	Nassau	* Aug., '07	March 7, '08	Oct., '09
Bellerophon	Dec. 3, '06	July 27, '07	Feb., '08	Westfalen	* Aug., '07	July 1, '08	Nov., '08
Temeraire	Jan. 1, '07	Aug. 24, '07	May, '08	Rheinland	April, '07	Sept. 26, '08	April, '10
Superb	Dec. 26, '06	Nov. 7, '07	May, '08	Posen	April, '07	Dec. 12, '08	May, '10
St. Vincent	Dec. 30, '07	Sept. 10, '08	May, '10	Ostfriesland	April, '08	Sept. 30, '09	Aug., '11
Collingwood	Feb. 3, '08	Nov. 7, '08	April, '10	Helgoland	June, '08	Sept. 25, '09	Aug., '11
Vanguard	Feb. 6, '08	Feb. 22, '09	Feb., '11	Thuringen	June, '08	Nov. 27, '09	July, '11
Neptune	Jan. 19, '08	Sept. 30, '09	Jan., '11	Oldenburg	† April, '09	June 30, '10	July, '11
Hercules	June 1, '08	May 10, '10	July, '11	Kaiser	†	Mar. 22, '11	—
Colossus	June 1, '08	April 9, '10	Aug., '11	Friedrich der Grosse	†	June 10, '11	—
Orion	Nov. 23, '09	Aug. 20, '10	Jan., '12	Kaiserin	†	Nov. 11, '11	—
Conqueror	Jan. 4, '10	May 1, '11	March, '12	König Albert	†	—	—
Monarch	Jan. 4, '10	Mar. 30, '11	April, '12	Prinzregent Luitpold	†	Dec. 17, '11	—
Thunderer	Jan. 4, '10	Feb. 1, '11	June, '12	Ersatz. Kurfürst (Friedrich Wilhelm)	†	—	—
King George V	Jan. 16, '11	Oct. 9, '11	—	Ersatz Weissenberg	†	—	—
Centurion	Jan. 16, '11	Nov. 18, '11	—	S.	†	—	—
Ajax	Jan. 13, '11	Mar. 21, '12	—	Ersatz Brandenburg, programme 1912-13	†	—	—
Audacious	Jan. 15, '12	—	—				
Iron Duke	Jan. 25, '12	—	—				
Marlborough	Jan. 30, '12	—	—				
Delhi	Jan. 30, '12	—	—				
Benbow	May	—	—				
New ship							
New ship							
New ship							
Programme of 1912-13							
<b>BATTLE CRUISERS :—</b>							
Indomitable	Nov. 21, '05	Mar. 16, '07	June, '08	Von de Tann	* March, '08	Mar. 20, '09	Sept., '10
Inflexible	Nov. 21, '05	June 26, '07	Oct., '08	Moltke	Sept., '08	April 7, '10	Sept., '11
Invincible	Nov. 21, '05	April 13, '07	March, '09	Goeben	† April, '09	Mar. 28, '11	July, '12
Indefatigable	Feb. 23, '06	Oct. 28, '09	April, '11	Szyltitz	†	—	—
Lion	Nov. 23, '06	Aug. 6, '10	June, '12	K.	†	—	—
Princess Royal	Jan. 4, '10	April 23, '11	—	Ersatz Kaiserin Augusta, programme 1912-13.	†	—	—
*New Zealand	April 1, '10	July 1, '11	—				
†Australia	April 1, '10	Oct. 25, '11	—				
Queen Mary	Feb. 27, '11	Mar. 20, '12	—				
Tiger	May	—	—				

\* Date keel was laid.  
† Promised to the firms in autumn, 1908.  
‡ No official information.

The above statement shows the numbers of Dreadnoughts, including Dreadnought cruisers, either built or building or authorised by the United Kingdom and Germany, respectively, at the beginning of June, 1912, giving in the case of each country the name of each ship, when laid down or date of giving out contract, date of launch, and date of completion.

\* Building at the charge of the New Zealand Government.  
† Building for the Commonwealth Government.



## CHAPTER II.

### GERMANY'S FIVE NAVY ACTS.

Under the existing circumstances, in order to protect Germany's sea trade and Colonies, there is only one means, viz., Germany must have a fleet of such strength that even for the mightiest Naval Power, a war with her would involve such risks as to jeopardise its own supremacy.

For this purpose it is not absolutely necessary that the German Fleet should be as strong as that of the greatest sea-power because, generally, *a great sea-power will not be in a position to concentrate all its forces against us.* But even if it should succeed in confronting us in superior force, the enemy would be so considerably weakened in overcoming the resistance of a strong German fleet that, notwithstanding a victory gained, the enemy's supremacy would not at first be secured any longer by a sufficient fleet.—*Explanatory Note to German Navy Act of 1900.*

**I**N order to appreciate the significance of the latest German Navy Law, it is necessary to understand the basis upon which naval expansion was begun in 1900—for the Act of 1898 was merely a preparatory measure—and the stages by which the naval establishment of the country has been gradually raised until now it is far higher than any country—not excluding Great Britain—has aimed at in the past.

In the following pages official details are given of the successive German Navy Laws, and it may serve a useful purpose, as providing some basis of comparison, if some details are given, in close association with a summary of the latest German Navy

Act, of the naval standing of the German Empire in 1898, when the expansion movement was initiated.

The following statement of the naval strength of the great Powers is based upon figures taken from the *Naval Pocket Book* for 1898, and reveals the number of ships of the various classes built, building or ordered on February 1st of that year :

				Armoured Ships.*	Cruisers.†	Coast Defence.‡	Torpedo Craft.§
Britain	..	..	..	88	154	60	313
France	..	..	..	60	74	24	288
Russia	..	..	..	39	29	27	188
Italy	..	..	..	30	23	—	212
Germany	..	..	..	28	24	13	127
United States	..	..	..	21	38	13	29
Austria-Hungary	..	..	..	15	17	4	79

This is one picture. It reveals the German Fleet of 1898 as a negligible quantity—the smallest in European waters. In contrast with this we have the German Fleet of to-day.

From the *Naval Annual* for 1912 the following

\* In the armoured ships are included all battleships, sea-going coast defence vessels, and armoured cruisers.

† In the cruisers are included all cruisers, protected and unprotected, and sloops.

‡ In the coast defence vessels are included all non seagoing coast defence vessels and larger armoured gunboats.

§ In the torpedo craft are included torpedo gunboats, torpedo boat destroyers, and torpedo boats.

|| The German armoured ships included one medium battleship of 11,000 tons, with four 9·4 in. guns, built, and two building, together with four battleships of under 10,000 tons, six battleships of 6,500 tons, and a number of old vessels of insignificant fighting value. Most of the torpedo craft were small and slow.

statement of the present strength of the great fleets is prepared :

		BATTLESHIPS.				CRUISERS.			
		Modern.	Cruiser.*	Older.	Total.	1st	and	3rd	Total
Britain	Built	37	5	15	57	41	33	32	106
„	Building	10	5	—	15	—	9	2	11
Germany	Built	17	2	10	29	9	8	30	47
„	Building	10	4	—	14	—	6	—	6
U. States	Built	22	—	9	31	15	3	14	32
„	Building	6	—	—	6	—	—	—	—
France	Built	12	—	9	21	15	11	10	36
„	Building	7	—	—	7	—	—	—	—
Japan	Built	9	—	4	13	13	4	13	30
„	Building	3	4	—	7	—	3	—	3
Russia	Built	7	—	3	10	6	8	2	16
„	Building	7	—	—	7	—	—	—	—
Italy	Built	6	—	2	8	7	3	12	22
„	Building	6	—	—	6	—	—	3	3
Austria	Built	6	—	3	9	—	2	4	6
„	Building	4	—	—	4	—	—	3	3

This comparative statement reveals Germany as at present about equal to the United States, and with an assurance that in two years' time, when the ships now building are completed, of occupying a position second only to that of Great Britain.

Having attained this pre-eminence among the nations as a naval Power, which possesses the largest army in the world, the German Government has now secured an Act to authorise the further expansion of the Fleet. This new measure makes

\* These cruiser-battleships, or battle-cruisers, are all Dreadnoughts. One of the British ships is for Australian waters.

provision for the following additions to the present establishment to the Navy :

3 battleships,  
2 unarmoured cruisers,  
Increase of submarines to 72,  
15,153 officers and men, and  
Provision for aircraft.

The period over which these additions are to be spread is six years, and dates have been given for beginning two of the battleships, one of which will be laid down in 1913 and one in 1916. By 1920 the additions will enable the Fleet to consist of :

41 battleships,  
20 armoured cruisers,  
Of these ships, 35 will, in 1920, be Dread-  
noughts, either Dreadnought battleships or  
Dreadnought cruisers, in each case the same  
type of battle gun being mounted.  
40 unarmoured cruisers,  
144 destroyers, and  
72 submarines.

These ships will be organised in accordance with the following scheme :

There will be *an active battle fleet*, consisting of one flagship and three squadrons of eight battleships each, and behind this force *another battle fleet*, consisting of two squadrons, each of eight battleships with nucleus crews.

With reference to the armoured cruisers, there will be eight attached to the active battle fleet, and four will be attached to the reserve battle fleet.

Attached to each battle squadron, both active and reserve, will be six protected cruisers, making a total of 30 in home waters.

Of the 144 torpedo-boat destroyers, one-half will be maintained in full commission and the other half in commission with nucleus crews.

The strength of the nucleus crews has been reduced in the new law by one-half, and the nucleus crews are to comprise one-third instead of two-thirds of the engine-room *personnel*, and one-quarter instead of one-half of the other *personnel*.

Of the 72 submarines, 54 are to be provided with full crews, and the remaining 18 boats are to be kept in material reserve without crews.

The Fleet for Foreign Service will consist of eight armoured cruisers. Two will be maintained in full commission and two in reserve, while four will constitute a detached flying squadron, available for purposes of reinforcement at home or abroad as may be required.

There will also be in the Foreign Service Fleet ten protected cruisers, eight being in full commission and two in reserve.

By means of this Act Germany proposes to add over 50 per cent. to the striking power of that portion of her fleet which is kept constantly ready for action in the North Sea and the Baltic.

In order that the course of naval legislation in Germany may be understood, there are appended a summary of the early Act of 1898, which was to have run for six years, and the texts of the Act of 1900, which was to have covered seventeen years, and of the amending Acts of 1906, 1908, and 1912.

## FIRST ACT—1898.

In accordance with the provisions of the first of the German Navy Acts, the Sextennate as it is called, the German Fleet, exclusive of torpedo craft, training ships, special service vessels and gunboats, was to be formed as follows :

*Active Fleet.*

## Home Service :

- 1 fleet flagship.
- 2 squadrons each of 8 battleships.
- 2 divisions each of 4 coast defence ships.
- 6 large cruisers.
- 16 small cruisers.

## Foreign Service :

- 3 large cruisers.
- 10 small cruisers.

*Reserve Fleet.*

## Home Service :

- 3 battleships.
- 3 large cruisers.
- 3 small cruisers.

In summarising this modest measure, the *Naval Annual* stated :

The ships completed or in hand on April 1st, 1898, and accepted as forming part of this prescribed establishment, were 12 battleships, 8 coast defence ships, 10 large and 23 small cruisers, but some of these will pass out of the active category before the expiration of the Sexennate, and within the period of six years other battleships and cruisers are to be laid down and completed to make up the legal number. The principles regulating the supersession of ships considered to be antiquated are laid down

in the Act. The active life of a battleship or coast defence vessel is reckoned at twenty-five years, of a large cruiser at twenty years, and of a small cruiser at fifteen years, these periods being counted from the date of the first credit for the building of any particular ship up to the same grant for the laying down of her successor.

The establishment of officers and men to be maintained is estimated in relation to the strength of the fleet, upon the following principles: For every ship abroad, half as many again must be voted as are necessary; there must be full companies for the ships belonging to the active formation of the Home Squadron, for one half of the torpedo boats and for the training and special service ships; there will be a nucleus (two-thirds being an engineering *personnel*) for the reserve formations at home and for the other half of the torpedo boats; the necessary number for service ashore, and an addition of 5 per cent. to the whole number.

#### SECOND ACT—1900.

Within two years—that is, within a short time of the outbreak of the war in South Africa—the Act of 1898 was superseded:—

##### *I.—Strength of the German Fleet.*

§ 1. The Fleet is to consist of:

The Battle Fleet:

2 Fleet Flagships.

4 Squadrons, each of 8 Battleships.

8 large Cruisers	} for scouting
24 small Cruisers	
} purposes.	

Foreign Fleet:

3 large Cruisers.

10 small Cruisers.



Reserve :

4 Battleships.

3 large Cruisers.

4 small Cruisers.

§ 2. Except in case of total loss, ships are to be replaced :

Battleships after 25 years.

Cruisers after 20 years.

The age of ships to be reckoned from the grant of the first instalment in payment for the ship to be replaced, to the passing of the instalment in payment for the ship to be built as " substitute " (*Ersatzschiff*).

## *II.—Ships in Commission.*

§ 3.—The state of Commission of the Battle Fleet is to be regulated according to the following rules :

(1) The 1st and 2nd Squadrons form the Active Battle Fleet. The 3rd and 4th Squadrons form the Reserve Battle Fleet.

(2) All the ships of the Active Battle Fleet and half the number of ships of the Reserve Battle Fleet are to be kept in permanent commission.

(3) Ships not in commission may be commissioned temporarily for the manœuvres.

## *III.—Numbers of all Ranks of Naval Personnel.*

§ 4. The numbers of Warrant Officers, Petty Officers and men for all the different parts of the sea and other services are to be at the following rate :

(1) Full complements for ships of the Active Battle Fleet, one half of the Torpedo Boats, School-ships and special vessels.

(2) Nucleus crews (technical personnel two thirds, and for the rest one-half of the full complement), for the Reserve Battle Fleet and the second half of the Torpedo Boats.

(3) One and a half the number of men, etc., required for ships serving abroad.

(4) The men necessary for shore service.

(5) An excess of 5 per cent on the total numbers, sub. (1) to (4).

*IV.—Expenditure.*

§ 5. The necessary expenditure must be inserted in the annual estimates of the Empire, the "Navy Estimates" forming part of them.

§ 6. If from the financial year 1901 onward the requirements of the Admiralty in recurring and non-recurring expenditure exceed the surplus of the stamp duties above the sum of 53,708,000 mks. (£2,685,000,) and if this difference cannot be borne upon the ordinary revenue of the Empire, this remainder is not to be paid by a rise or increase in the indirect Imperial taxes on articles for consumption of the masses.

*V.—Conclusion.*

This Act comes into force simultaneously with the Act of April 27th, 1894 (Gazette p. 381), amending the Stamp duties, and the Imperial Tariff.

The Navy Act of April 10th, 1898 (Gazette p. 165) is herewith repealed.

*June 14th, 1900.*

THIRD ACT—1906.

The new measure for the amendment of the Navy Act of June 14th, 1900, was as follows:

*Single Clause.*

The strength of the German Fleet as fixed in paragraph 1 of the Navy Act, June 14th, 1900, is to be increased :

1. The Foreign Fleet by 5 Armoured Cruisers.
2. The Fleet Reserve by 1 Armoured Cruiser.

Signed with our own hand and sealed, etc.,  
*June 5th, 1906.*

## FOURTH ACT—1908.

This measure was an amendment to paragraph 2 of Navy Act, June 14th, 1900 :

*Single Clause.*

Paragraph 2 of the Navy Act of June 14th, 1900, is herewith repealed, and the following paragraph takes its place.

2. Except in cases of total loss, Battleships and Cruisers are to be replaced after 20 years.

The age of a ship is to be reckoned as from the year of granting the first instalment in payment for the ship to be replaced, to the granting of the first instalment in payment of the "substitute" (Ersatzschiff).

The building of the substitutes during the period 1908 to 1917 is regulated according to Schedule B. (This schedule set forth that four large armoured ships should be laid down annually between 1908 and 1911 instead of three, and that in 1912 onwards two annually should be built.)

*April 6th, 1908.*

NOTE.—The effect of this measure was to accelerate the construction of battleships, since their effective life was reduced by one-fifth.

FIFTH ACT—1912.

The final expansion measure was passed in May, 1912 :—

*Article 1.*

The following § 1 replaces §1 of the Law concerning the German Fleet of the 14th June, 1900, and the amendment to this Law of the 5th June, 1906.

There shall be :—

1. The Battle Fleet, consisting of—
  - 1 fleet flagship,
  - 5 squadrons of 8 battleships each,
  - 12 large cruisers } as scouts.
  - 30 small cruisers }
2. The Foreign Service Fleet, consisting of—
  - 8 large cruisers,
  - 10 small cruisers.

*Article 2.*

The following paragraphs replace paragraphs 1 and 2 of § 3 of the Law concerning the German Fleet of the 14th June, 1900 :

1. 1 fleet flagship,  
 3 squadrons of battleships,  
 8 large cruisers, and  
 18 small cruisers  
     form the Active Battle Fleet ;  
 2 squadrons of battleships,  
 4 large cruisers, and  
 12 small cruisers  
     form the Reserve Battle Fleet.
2. The whole of the Battleships and Cruisers of

the Active Battle Fleet and a quarter of those of the Reserve Battle Fleet are to be kept permanently in commission.

*Article 3.*

The following paragraphs are to replace the opening sentence and paragraphs 1 and 2 of § 4 of the law concerning the German Fleet of the 14th June, 1900:—

The following proportions of warrant officers, petty officers, and men of the Seamen, Dockyard, and Torpedo Divisions, as well as the Submarine Sections, shall be available :

1. Full crews for the ships belonging to the Active Battle Fleet, for the whole of the torpedo boats and submarines with exception of the material reserve of both these classes of boats, for the school ships and for the special ships.

2. Nucleus crews ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of the engine-room personnel,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the remaining personnel of the full crews) for the ships belonging to the Reserve Battle Fleet.

*Article 4.*

The Imperial Chancellor is empowered to publish the text of the Law concerning the German Fleet of the 14th June, 1900, with such alterations as result from the Laws of the 5th June, 1906, 6th April, 1908, and the present Law.

---

*Argument.*

The organisation of the Fleet still suffers from two serious defects :

The one defect consists in the fact that in the

Autumn of every year the time-expired men, *i.e.*, almost  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the crew in all ships of the Battle Fleet, are discharged and replaced mainly by recruits from the *inland population*. Owing to this, the readiness of the Battle Fleet for war is considerably impaired for a prolonged period.

The second defect consists in the fact that at the present time, with an establishment of 58 capital ships, only 21 ships are available at first, if the Reserve Fleet cannot be made ready *in proper time*. Since the Fleet Law was drawn up, this latter has become more and more unlikely, as the moment at which the Reserve Fleet can be ready for war gets more and more deferred. This is a consequence of the ever-growing complexity of modern ships and of the steadily growing difficulty in training large organisations. At the present day, therefore, the Reserve Fleet only comes into consideration as a *second fighting line*; but in view of our great numerical strength in reserve men, it still maintains its great importance.

Both these defects are to be removed, or at any rate considerably ameliorated, by the gradual formation of a third *active* squadron.

The requisite *ships* for this third active squadron are to be derived :

- (a) By dispensing with the Reserve Fleet Flagship.
- (b) By dispensing with the present existing Material Reserve—4 battleships, 4 large and 4 small cruisers.
- (c) By newly constructing 3 battleships and 2 small cruisers.

As the *maintenance in commission* of ships in the Reserve Fleet can be reduced by one-half in consequence of the increase of active organisations, the formation of a third active squadron only renders the additional maintenance in commission of 3 battleships, 3 large and 3 small cruisers necessary beyond those to be maintained in commission already provided for in the Fleet Law. This involves a corresponding increase in personnel.

A further increase in personnel is necessary as the complements of all classes of ships, including torpedo boats, have had to be augmented.

Moreover, an increase in submarines and the acquisition of some airships is contemplated. The submarines, which are still at the present moment without organisation, are to be organised—as regards manning—after the manner of the torpedo boats.

---

## APPENDICES.

1. Comparison of the Amendment with the Fleet Laws.
2. Programme of Construction.
3. Increased requirements of Personnel.
4. Calculation of Cost.

## APPENDIX I.

### *Comparison of the Amendment with the Fleet Laws.*

#### PROVISIONS OF THE FLEET LAW.

##### I. *Establishment of Ships.*

##### § 1.

There shall be (1) The Battle Fleet, consisting of—



2 fleet flagships, 4 squadrons of 8 battleships each, 8 large cruisers and 24 small cruisers as scouts. (2) The Foreign Service Fleet, consisting of—8 large cruisers and 10 small cruisers. (3) The Material Reserve, consisting of—4 battleships, 4 large cruisers and 4 small cruisers.

ALTERATIONS OF THE AMENDMENT.

I. *Establishment of Ships.*

§ 1.

There shall be (1) The Battle Fleet, consisting of—1 fleet flagship, 5 squadrons of 8 battleships each, 12 large cruisers and 30 small cruisers as scouts. (2) The Foreign Service Fleet, consisting of—8 large cruisers and 10 small cruisers.

PROVISIONS OF THE FLEET LAW.

II. *Maintenance in Commission.*

§ 3.

The following principles obtain regarding the maintenance in commission of the Battle Fleet: (1) The 1st and 2nd Squadrons form the Active Battle Fleet, the 3rd and 4th Squadrons the Reserve Battle Fleet.

(2) The whole of the battleships and cruisers of the Active Battle Fleet, and one-half of those of the Reserve Battle Fleet, are to be kept permanently in commission.

ALTERATIONS OF THE AMENDMENT.

II. *Maintenance in Commission.*

§ 3.

The following principles obtain regarding the maintenance in commission of the Battle Fleet: (1) 1 fleet flagship, 3 squadrons of battleships, 8 large cruisers, and 18 small cruisers form the Active Battle Fleet. 2 squadrons of battleships, 4 large cruisers, and 12 small cruisers form the Reserve Battle Fleet.

(2) The whole of the battleships and cruisers of the Active Battle Fleet and *one-quarter* of those of the Reserve Battle Fleet are to be kept permanently in commission.

#### PROVISIONS OF THE FLEET LAW.

##### III. *Establishment of Personnel.*

###### § 4.

The following proportions of warrant officers, petty officers, and men of the Seamen, Dockyard, and Torpedo Divisions shall be available :

(1) Full crews for the ships belonging to the Active Battle Fleet, *for half* of the torpedo-boats, for the school ships, and for the special ships.

(2) Nucleus crews ( $\frac{2}{3}$  of the engine-room personnel,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the remaining personnel of the full crews) for the ships belonging to the Reserve Battle Fleet, as well as *for the second half* of the torpedo-boats.

#### ALTERATIONS OF THE AMENDMENT.

##### III. *Establishment of Personnel.*

###### § 4.

The following proportions of warrant officers, petty officers, and men of the Seamen, Dockyard, and Torpedo Divisions, *as well as of the Submarine Sections*, shall be available :

(1) Full crews for the ships belonging to the Active Battle Fleet, *for the whole of the torpedo-boats and submarines with exception of the Material Reserve of both these classes of boats, for the school ships and for the special ships.*

(2) Nucleus crews ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of the engine-room personnel,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the remaining personnel of the full crews) for the ships belonging to the Reserve Battle Fleet.

The remaining provisions of the Fleet Laws remain unaltered.

*Explanations.*

*With regard to § 1.*

The legal establishment of ships experiences an increase of 3 battleships and 2 small cruisers through the Amendment :

	Previous Establishment.	Future Establishment.	Increase.
Battleships ..	38	41	+ 3
Large cruisers ..	20	20	..
Small cruisers ..	38	40	+ 2

*With regard to § 3.*

Of the legal establishment of ships, there are to be in commission :

	Battleships		Large Cruisers		Small Cruisers	
	Previ- ously	In Future	Previ- ously	In Future	Previ- ously	In Future
In the <i>Active</i>						
Battle Fleet	17	25	4	8	12	18
In the <i>Reserve</i>						
Battle Fleet	9	4	2	1	6	3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total ..	26	29	6	9	18	21

Consequently, additionally in commission in future :

3 battleships, 3 large cruisers, 3 small cruisers.

*With regard to § 4.*

1. In accordance with the Memorandum to the Estimates of 1906 there are to be :

Altogether—144 Torpedo-boats.

Of which ready for use—99 with full active service crews.

As Material Reserve—45 without crews.

*Nothing is altered in this by the Amendment.*

§ 4 of the *Fleet Law of 1900* provided for 72 full crews, and 72 nucleus crews, making together a total of 144 full crews (compare Footnote to Memorandum accompanying Estimates of 1906).

Only 99 are required, and the *Fleet Law*, therefore, demands 17 full crews too many.

Article 3 of the *Amendment* brings the number of crews legally to be held in readiness into line with actual requirements, *and therefore reduces the Torpedo personnel demanded under the Fleet Law by 17 boats' crews.*

2. It is proposed to demand 6 Submarines every year. With a twelve years' life this gives an establishment of 72 boats. For 54 of these boats active service crews are estimated for; 18 form the Material Reserve without crews.

## APPENDIX 2.

### *Programme of Construction.*

#### PREVIOUS Programme of Construction.

Year		Battleships	Large Cruisers	Total Large Ships	Small Cruisers
1912	..	1	1	2	2
1913	..	1	1	2	2
1914	..	1	1	2	2
1915	..	1	1	2	2
1916	..	1	1	2	2
1917	..	1	1	2	2*

#### FUTURE Programme of Construction.

1912	..	1	1	2	2
1913	..	2†	1	3	2
1914	..	1	1	2	2

Year		Battleships	Large Cruisers	Total Large Ships	Small Cruisers
1915	..	..	I	2	2
1916	..	..	2†	3	2
1917	..	..	I	2	2*

\* Including one additional ship outstanding from the Fleet Law.

† Including one additional ship under the Amendment.

The year of construction of one battleship and two small cruisers is reserved.

### APPENDIX 3.

#### *Additional Personnel required.*

(A.)—Men of the Seamen, Dockyard, and Torpedo Divisions, as well as of the Submarine Sections—14,310 ; annual average 1590.\*

(B.)—Executive Officers—433 ; annual average, 48.

(C.)—Engineers—116 ; annual average, 13.

(D.)—Medical Officers and Sick Berth Staff—175 ; annual average, 19.

(E.)—Paymasters and Accountant Staff—119 ; annual average, 13.

#### *Remark.*

The requisite increase in personnel consists of—

(1) The personnel necessary for additional ships to be maintained in commission under the Amendment.

(2) The personnel to be held in readiness for the submarines.

\* 500 men are to be demanded in excess of the average annual increase in each of the three years 1912 to 1914. This increase is to be balanced by a corresponding decrease in the three years 1918 to 1920.

(3) The personnel becoming necessary in consequence of alterations in complements and increased activity in training.

In regard to (3), the complements of torpedo-boats, and in part also of the ships, have experienced an increase which is not taken into account in the calculations for the requirements of personnel for the Fleet Law, as this could not be foreseen. The larger complements have become necessary owing to growth in size and speed of ships and torpedo-boats, as well as on account of the greater requirements of the guns in guns' crews.

The additional requirements of Training personnel is a consequence of the increase in active naval fighting forces.

# APPENDIX 4.—CALCULATION OF COST.

DESCRIPTION OF EXPENDITURE.	EXPENDITURE.					
	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917
	£	£	£	£	£	£
A.—Shipbuilding and armaments, including submarines and airships	342,000	832,000	1,174,000	1,076,000	1,174,000	881,000
B.—Other non-recurring expenditure						
— Increase in annual amount by	245,000	245,000	245,000	147,000	—	—
C.—Recurring expenditure.—†						
Augmentation of annual increase, foreseen in the sums required calculated in 1908, by 196,000 <i>l.</i> each on the average, graduated according to probable requirements	147,000	293,000	440,000	685,000	930,000	1,174,000
TOTALS, A to C	734,000	1,370,000	1,859,000	1,908,000	2,104,000	2,055,000
From which an increase in the demands on the ordinary revenue results, as compared with the previous year, of	+734,000	+636,000	+489,000	+49,000	+196,000	— 49,000

*Note.*—The Navy Estimates for 1917, it is calculated, will amount to 22,651,000*l.*, including the additional sum required under the Amendment. That is to say, 98,000*l.* less than the sum of 22,749,000*l.* for the current year (1911) as calculated when the Law was amended in 1908 (which includes a further sum of 166,000*l.* due to the increase of pay sanctioned in 1909).

† In consequence of the projected increase in the wages of the men, the sums quoted for recurring expenses will each be augmented by 49,000*l.* from 1915 inclusive.



## CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE NAVY.

INDIA.—Maintenance of His Majesty's Ships in Indian waters, £100,000. Indian Troop Service (on account of work performed by the Admiralty), £3,400. Repayment on account of services rendered by His Majesty's Ships engaged in the suppression of the Arms Traffic in the Persian Gulf, £64,000.

AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH.—Survey of the North-West coast of Australia, £7,500. Maintenance of an Australasian Squadron and the establishment of a branch of the Royal Naval Reserve, £200,000.

DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND.—Maintenance of an Australasian Squadron and of the Imperial Navy generally; also for the establishment of a branch of the Royal Naval Reserve, £100,000.

CAPE COLONY.—General maintenance of the Navy, £50,000.

NATAL.—General maintenance of the Navy, £35,000.

NEWFOUNDLAND.—Maintenance of a branch of the Royal Naval Reserve, £3,000. Total, £570,480.

\*AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH, DOMINION OF CANADA.—Contribution on account of liability for Retired Pay of Officers and Pensions of Men lent from the Royal Navy, £7,580.

The Australian payment will cease in 1913. The Commonwealth is building a fleet-unit, and will take over the Dockyard at Sydney, created by the Admiralty. New Zealand has presented the Royal Navy with a battle cruiser and three destroyers, of which the former is to be retained as a unit of the Home Fleet. The Dominion Government will also continue to make an annual subvention of £100,000 to the Royal Navy. The Canadian scheme, proposed in 1909, was abandoned by the Borden Administration in 1911, with a view to consultation with the Admiralty. The Dominion has never made any contribution to the Royal Navy. The Government has taken over, free of charge, the Royal dockyards at Halifax and Esquimalt, with all their equipment. The South African Colonies have not come to any decision, but the Union Government still pays to the Admiralty the small sums formerly remitted by Cape Colony and Natal.

\* These are merely book-keeping transactions; certain British officers have been lent to these two Governments.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE DANGER OF THE OVERSEAS DOMINIONS.

**I**T is now known beyond the shadow of doubt that there is to be a further expansion of the German Navy, and this renewal of competition is already reacting upon neighbouring Powers. Thus the silent, bloodless warfare is becoming more intense and the strain is increasing upon British taxpayers.

We had a naval crisis three years ago. The immediate difficulties of the situation were surmounted at an added cost to the people of the United Kingdom of nearly thirty-six millions sterling.\*

We are at grips with another crisis, far more grave in its character. The new situation is one of peril to the whole Empire, but unless the oversea Dominions come forward the burden will fall on the United Kingdom. On the one hand we have this admittedly heavy and increasing naval expenditure borne by the people of the United Kingdom for all the British peoples, and upon the other we have the admission by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that "there are millions of men, women, and children in the United Kingdom who through no fault of their own go through their life sodden in poverty, wretchedness,

\* Compared with the expenditure of 1908-9, there was a rise of £3,552,206 in 1909-10, of £8,238,027 in 1910-11, of £12,211,191 in 1911-12, and of £11,904,091 in 1912-13.

and despair." This is the situation in the mother country on the eve of the renewed challenge to our naval supremacy which has come from Germany, and which is already producing its inevitable effect upon the shipbuilding proposals of other nations. France, Russia, Italy, Austria, Spain, Turkey, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden and Norway—each is embarking upon fresh and costly naval schemes. Of this renewed activity the taxpayers of the United Kingdom will feel the cumulative effect. In face of the new peril—a very real peril—what will the oversea dominions do?

As Lord Rosebery remarked at the time of the naval crisis of 1909, "We live in the midst of what I think was called by Petrarch a *tacens bellum*, a silent warfare, in which not a drop of blood is shed in anger, but in which the very last drop is extracted from the body by the lancets of European statesmen." These words represented the conditions which existed three years ago, but they apply more pointedly to the new situation created by Germany's further naval expansion. Lord Rosebery added in his address to the oversea delegates to the Imperial Press Conference :

We can and we will build Dreadnoughts, or whatever the newest type of ship may be, as long as we have a shilling to spend on them, or a man to put into them. All that we can and will do ; but I am not sure even that will be enough, and I think it may be your duty to take back to your young dominions across the seas this message and this impression, that some personal duty and responsibility for national defence rests on every man and citizen of the Empire.

New Zealand and Australia came forward at the last naval crisis with spontaneous offers of help ; under a Ministry whose Imperialism was restrained by a narrower nationalism, Canada held aloof, and the South African Union did not then exist. A new Government has been returned to power in the great Dominion across the Atlantic—a Government which, above all things, is pledged to cement the bonds of Empire ; and the distinct and separate colonies of South Africa have been welded into a great confederation enjoying to the full those self-governing powers which are the glory and the strength, as well as the possible weakness, of the British Imperial system. Will the new challenge to British supremacy meet with no response either in Canada or in South Africa, when it is understood that, grave as were the conditions which were foreseen in 1909, those conditions are now destined to become far more grave ? If these two self-governing colonies realise the danger which threatens them no less than the inhabitants of the United Kingdom, there is no reason to doubt that, when they are willing to help, the Admiralty will be willing to smooth the way for applying that help in the most economical and effective manner without undermining those autonomous powers in which they take a natural pride. Mr. Winston Churchill is not a First Lord who will fear to speak the truth if the truth is wanted.

## I. THE DEFENCE CONFERENCE OF 1909.

The principles upon which the maritime interests

of a maritime Empire must be defended are fixed and permanent; however the conditions may change, the underlying principles never change. The views which the Admiralty expressed at the Conference with the self-governing dominions in 1909 we may be sure are the opinions which the present Board of Admiralty hold no less strongly. It was then laid down :

If the problem of Imperial naval defence were considered merely as a problem of naval strategy it would be found that the greatest output of strength for a given expenditure is obtained by the maintenance of a single navy with the concomitant unity of training and unity of command. In furtherance, then, of the simple strategical ideal the maximum of power would be gained if all parts of the Empire contributed according to their needs and resources to the maintenance of the British Navy.

In enunciating this principle, which is merely an elaboration of the axiom that union is strength, the Admiralty stated a proposition the truth of which no one, certainly no naval officer, would attempt to controvert. But at the same time the Admiralty exhibited the timidity which the Imperial Government has almost always shown in its dealings with the oversea dominions. It has been the fashion in Downing Street and at the Admiralty and War Office to treat these growing countries as spoilt children to whom the undiluted truth must seldom or never be told. When has the British Government, for instance, suggested to the oversea dominions, enjoying the fullest freedom compatible with Im-

perial unity, that the greater part of the vast burden of debt, which is now costing the people of the United Kingdom twenty-five millions annually, was incurred in order to secure those favoured lands in which Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans live and prosper? When has the British Government ever had the courage to remind these citizens of the Empire overseas of the many years during which their territories were defended by the British Army stationed, at least in part, within their borders, without payment in money or kind for the service rendered? \* When, again, has the British Government ever reminded these oversea dominions of the heavy expenditure, amounting to upwards of three millions sterling annually, incurred for many years in the upkeep of the extra European squadrons which have patrolled the outer seas and defended their growing ocean-borne wealth in the past?

During the period when these daughter lands were grappling with the problems which face every new community, it would have been ungenerous to remind them of the price at which their freedom had been bought; but now the situation has changed, and the relations between the mother country and these oversea dominions have also changed. The burden of armaments has become almost unbearable to an old country with a number of social problems

\* The British troops in South Africa cost £1,152,500 a year to which the Union Government makes no contribution, while Mauritius (not being a self-governing Dominion) pays £30,000 towards the military charges of £123,000, and other Crown Colonies make generous contributions.



calling for costly remedies. These daughter lands have been endowed with the fullest measure of freedom, but while they have been permitted to enjoy all the privileges which the British connection confers, and have been enabled to go about their business on the high seas in the full confidence that the British Fleet is not less their defence than the defence of the people of the British Isles, the latter pay, practically unaided, for the maintenance and defence of the Imperial system.

It has become a tradition in the United Kingdom to conceal the naked truth from these younger sons of the Empire, and even to-day, when the British people are still bearing the burden of Empire with little or no assistance, paying alike for the British Navy, the British Army, the British diplomatic service, the British consular service, and the Crown itself, statesmen of the United Kingdom treat their fellow-statesmen from the oversea dominions as perfectly equal partners in the British Empire, but fail to remind them of the responsibilities which partnership involves. Even a junior partner is not permitted to put his hand into the till and take a share of the profits without counting the cost at which those profits have been made.

It was in this spirit of spoon-feeding, unfair to the British taxpayer and derogatory to the dignity of self-governing countries, that the Admiralty in 1909 met the representatives of the great oversea nations. There is not a naval officer in the British service who does not realise that a single navy, with the concomitant unity of training and unity of command, is



the one reasonable and economical and sound principle upon which to defend the united people of a united Empire. Sea power in the mother country is cheap, cheaper by 30 or 40 per cent. than in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa ; sea power in the mother country, with its teeming population, is easily created ; sea power in the mother country reaches a high standard of efficiency because the sea habit is an inherited instinct.

The Admiralty is a department which must bow before what are regarded as political considerations. It was concluded in 1909 that the self-governing colonies should be still fed with a spoon ; their delegates should be *fêted* and made much of ; they should be taken into the inner councils of the Empire as equals, but under no consideration should they be told the undiluted truth that the British taxpayer, with a Budget approaching two hundred millions sterling annually (of which seventy-two millions is devoted to defence), is still bearing the white man's burden almost without assistance. The motto of the responsible representatives of the British Fleet at that conference appears to have been this : let us be pleasant and tactful whatever may befall ; let us admit the existence of a naval crisis, but let us not press upon the representatives of the self-governing dominions the real solution of the crisis, lest the solution should prove unpalatable.

It was in this spirit that the Admiralty, no doubt under superior authority, toned down and whittled away the strategic principle stated so boldly in the paragraph already quoted. They were permitted

to speak honestly this once, but there immediately followed reservations and the statement of political considerations which almost entirely robbed their professional advice of its value. The politico-naval "bunkum" was expressed in these words :

It has, however, long been recognised that in defining the conditions under which the naval forces of the Empire should be developed, other considerations than those of strategy alone must be taken into account. The various circumstances of the oversea dominions have to be borne in mind. Though all have in them the seeds of a great advance in population, wealth and power, they have at the present time attained to different stages in their growth. Their geographical position has subjected them to internal and external strains, varying in kind and intensity. Their history and physical environment have given rise to individual national sentiment, for the expression of which room must be found.

A simple contribution of money or material may be to one Dominion the most acceptable form in which to assist in Imperial defence.

Another, while ready to provide local naval forces, and to place them at the disposal of the Crown in the event of war, may wish to lay the foundations upon which a future Navy of its own could be raised.

A third may think that the best manner in which it can assist in promoting the interests of the Empire is in undertaking certain local services not directly of a naval character, but which may relieve the Imperial Government from expenses which would otherwise fall on the British Exchequer.

It was in such circumstances that the foundations were laid for colonial co-operation for Imperial naval defence.

Sir Joseph Ward, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, brushed aside these tactful reservations, and announced that this dominion would abide by her patriotic decision of the previous March, and "would supply a Dreadnought for the British Navy as already offered; the ship to be under the control of and stationed wherever the Admiralty considers advisable." Sir Joseph Ward, on behalf of the people of New Zealand, stated in so many words that their attachment to the Empire was not the less because the Empire was in peril, and although they numbered only just over one million—men, women, and children—they at least were prepared to recognise that so long as they remained under the British flag they should contribute to the only Fleet that could guard that flag from dishonour.

In accordance with the agreement come to by the Admiralty and the New Zealand Government, it was determined that two protected cruisers, three destroyers, and two submarines should be detached from the British Navy in time of peace and stationed in New Zealand waters, in order to provide a measure of defence for purely local interests, and that so far as possible any available colonial officers and men should be drafted into these ships. The New Zealand Government agreed to pay the whole cost of this scheme. In this way New Zealand exhibited her loyalty, and it is now known that she has decided to make a further sacrifice on behalf of the Empire. The original intention was that the splendid battle-cruiser "New Zealand" should form a part of the British squadron in China waters,

periodically paying visits of ceremony to New Zealand ports. It is now the fixed intention that this ship, when completed, shall make a world tour, in the course of which visits will be paid to the principal New Zealand ports in order that the inhabitants of this dominion—who have set up a standard of patriotism reached by no other daughter land—may have an opportunity of seeing the first man-of-war designed at their behest and built with their money. When these visits of ceremony are over, this Dreadnought will return to Europe, there to form an important link in the chain of defence which protects not less the peoples of the Antipodes than the inhabitants of the United Kingdom. In the history of the world there is no more splendid illustration of devotion to a sound political and strategical ideal than that furnished by the New Zealanders' patriotic action.

In the case of the Commonwealth of Australia, advantage was taken of the smooth sayings of the Admiralty. It was agreed to provide local naval forces and to place them at the disposal of the Crown in the event of war, thus laying the foundations upon which a future colonial navy could be raised. In the conference with the Admiralty it was arranged that Australia should provide a fleet-unit to consist of a battle-cruiser, three protected cruisers of the Bristol class, six destroyers, and three submarines. It was agreed that these vessels should be manned as far as possible by Australian officers and seamen, and the numbers required to make up the full complement for manning purposes should

be lent by the Royal Navy. In other words, Australia determined to create the nucleus of a local navy which in war time should be under the control of the British naval commander-in-chief in Pacific waters. It was calculated that this scheme would cost £750,000 a year—£150,000 of this being due to the higher rates of pay in Australia and the cost of training and subsidiary establishments. In other words, in British currency Australia was to pay £750,000 a year for sea-power which could be bought in Great Britain for £600,000. It was further agreed that this annual cost should eventually be met by the Commonwealth, but that until such time as the oversea Government could take over the whole burden the Imperial authorities should make an annual contribution of £250,000. Not only has the Commonwealth Government remained faithful to this agreement, but it has announced that it does not intend to ask the Imperial authorities to make any contribution towards the expenditure which the scheme involves. At the end of this year, or the beginning of next, the fleet-unit will leave for Australian waters, and the Australian Government receives as a free gift the dockyard at Sydney, with all its valuable equipment, upon which the British taxpayers have spent millions sterling.

The Australian people are thus establishing a "baby navy" of their own in close association with the British Fleet. It does not represent as high a form of Imperial endeavour as has commended itself to the people of New Zealand; it contains

within it seeds which may bear sour fruit in the future ; it can be of no appreciable war value for many years, but it constitutes a source of saving to the British taxpayer in that he will henceforth be relieved from the cost and responsibility of the local defence of these waters.

The conditions of the Commonwealth were peculiar at the date when this naval agreement was reached, because it was thought that the alliance with Japan might soon come to an end, and therefore there was a feeling of nervousness as to the influence of Japanese policy upon the colonial ideal of a " white continent." The Japanese alliance has since been renewed ; the Australian people have no more to fear than the people of New Zealand, and it remains to be seen whether in view of the renewed naval crisis they will be prepared to make the great sacrifice which their neighbours are apparently prepared to make, and will agree that the battle-cruiser *Australia*, instead of being permanently stationed in Australian waters, shall return to Europe, there to strengthen the metropolitan fleets upon which the main defence of the British Empire depends to-day, and will continue to depend so long as the silent war of armaments continues to be waged in European waters. After all, this would be nothing more than a reversion to the original offer which the people-of the Commonwealth made to the heavily burdened people of the United Kingdom in 1909. If they determine upon so effective a reply to the renewed challenge to British sea-power, they will have the satisfaction of knowing that the presence of this great and



costly ship in European waters will contribute materially to the maintenance of peace, upon which their prosperity and happiness depend.

While New Zealand accepted the undiluted strategic principle enunciated by the Admiralty at the Conference of 1909, and while the Commonwealth of Australia accepted the alternative of a fleet-unit, Canada, under the guidance of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, accepted an alternative which had never entered into the mind of the Admiralty until "the Canadian representatives," to quote the Blue Book (Cd. 49,498), "explained in what respect they desired the advice of the Admiralty." The Admiralty at once stated that "it would be difficult to make any suggestions or to formulate any plans without knowing approximately the sum of money which Canada would spend." The Canadian representatives then suggested that two plans might be presented: one incurring an annual expenditure of £400,000, and the other an expenditure of £600,000, omitting in both cases the cost of the present fishery service and hydrographic surveys, but including the maintenance of Halifax and Esquimalt dockyards—to be free gifts from the mother country—and the wireless telegraph service, estimated at some £50,000 a year. It will thus be seen that from the outset the Canadian representatives had a very modest opinion of the cost which they could incur. New Zealand, with her many pressing internal problems, expressed her willingness to contribute rather more than five shillings per head of her population, the Commonwealth agreed to an expenditure equal to just under



three shillings per head, but Canada, the richest of all the dominions, with an over-flowing treasury, felt able, under Sir Wilfrid Laurier's guidance, to commit herself to no more than about 1s. 1½*d.* per head, in contrast with £1 a head paid by the British taxpayers.

Thus it came about that Canada decided upon a scheme which was recognised from the first as being framed, to meet not the peril of the naval situation, but the political exigencies of the Canadian Government dependent upon a section of the population which, while prepared to enjoy all the benefits of the British connection, have always expressed its unwillingness to bear any of the burden. The agreement, if such a term can be applied to the understanding with the Admiralty, was embodied in the Naval Service Act which was passed by the Canadian Parliament, in spite of the larger views of the Opposition led by the Hon. R. L. Borden. Under this Act it was proposed to create a local navy consisting of four cruisers of the Bristol type, one of the *Boadicea*, and six destroyers to be divided—a notable illustration of the influence of political considerations even upon the diluted strategy which commended itself to the Canadian Government—between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. It was announced that if the vessels were constructed in the Dominion, as it was afterwards decided they should be, the capital cost would be increased by 22 per cent.—a very low estimate.

What intention Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues really had at the time when this Act was

passed it is impossible to say, but the fact remains that the Laurier Government went out of office last year without a single keel having been laid.

From the first Mr. Borden, who is now the Prime Minister, sharply criticised the proposals. Reporting upon the debate on the Bill which took place at Ottawa on January 11th, 1910, the *Times* recorded :

He dwelt on the advantages to Canada of her relations with the Empire, and twitted Sir Wilfrid Laurier with still holding views in favour of Canadian independence, as shown by his declaration during this Session that the proposed Canadian Navy would go to no war unless the Parliament of Canada chose to send it. Could the rest of the Empire, he asked, be at war with some great naval power and Canada be at peace? The Premier's declaration, he held, meant the complete severance of every tie which now bound Canada to the Empire. But before the flag was lowered on Canadian soil there were some millions of Canadians who would know the reason why. Mr. Borden declared that he was no militarist, but he fully realised the necessity of provision for defence. Canada could not be a hermit nation. Mr. Gladstone in 1878 said that the strength of England would not be found in alliances with great military Powers, but in the efficiency and supremacy of her Navy—"a Navy as powerful as the navies of all Europe." . . . The proposals of the Canadian Government were, in his opinion, altogether inadequate. They were too much for experiment in the organisation of the Canadian naval service, and too little for immediate and effective aid.

Mr. Borden's criticisms of the Canadian scheme, and his interpretation of the situation in Europe,

have been proved by events to be well founded. The Canadian people by their votes have since admitted that the Laurier proposals are inadequate, and the crisis to which Mr. Borden referred came within the three years, but by good luck, or good statesmanship, fortunately passed without war.

## II. THE NEW NAVAL SITUATION.

Another and a greater crisis is now before us, and in these circumstances the new Canadian Government, which Mr. Borden leads, has determined on a strong line of policy in full sympathy with the newly aroused Imperial spirit in the Dominion, which found expression during the recent elections. Speaking in the House of Commons, the Hon. J. D. Hazen, the Minister of Marine, has stated :

After such consideration and inquiry as may be necessary, the Government will present its naval policy to Parliament and the people. That policy will undoubtedly require legislation which will involve the repeal of the Naval Service Act. In the meantime the Act will remain on the Statute books for the purposes in connection with the fishery protection service and otherwise. Before any permanent naval policy is put in force the people will be given an opportunity to pronounce upon it.

Canada has thus a clean slate upon which to write any naval policy which commends itself to the Canadian people. South Africa also has a clean slate upon which she may also write whatever naval policy she desires. These two oversea dominions

have an opportunity of striking a blow for British naval supremacy even more dramatic than the blows which were struck by New Zealand and Australia three years ago.

The situation is more grave to-day than it was in 1909, because the prospective burden which the defence of British interests must involve in the future is now known to be greater. A year ago it was confidently anticipated that in the present year Germany would, in accordance with the Navy Law, revert from a four armoured-ship programme to a two armoured-ship programme, and that this reduced output would enable the British naval authorities automatically to decrease the expenditure upon the Fleet. It was hoped that the British Navy Estimates might be eventually brought back to a forty-million limit, and that at that cost the traditional superiority of the British Navy could be maintained year by year. This anticipation can no longer be entertained. Germany has decided to amend the Navy Law. She is increasing her standing fleet by 50 per cent., and her personnel by over 15,000, and she is going to build more ships.

It may be said, as it frequently is said, that whether the Empire existed or not the British people would be bound in their own interests to maintain a supreme fleet. This is true, and in the past the taxpayers of the United Kingdom have, with little complaint, met year by year the increasing charges which the upkeep of the Fleet has involved. But the conditions have changed : the oversea dominions

now have a population equal to about one-third of the population of the United Kingdom, and these peoples who live overseas bear far lighter burdens than do we who live in the British Isles. They are faced by none of those accumulating social problems which are casting a heavy burden upon the British Exchequer. While claiming the privileges of the Imperial connection, they realise but imperfectly that those privileges carry with them proportionate responsibilities.

The fact is that Germany to-day aspires not to such a modest measure of naval power as she aspired to as recently as 1900, but to the ambition of rising, step by step, to a position of equality with the British Fleet. This is the aim of Pan-Germans, and it is they who, supported by powerful trade interests, are carrying on the naval agitation in Germany. They have obtained from the Imperial Government a new Navy Act, but they are not satisfied. The new measure is intended to be but a stepping-stone to yet another Navy Act, by which it is hoped eventually to create a naval establishment which shall be admittedly as powerful as that upon which our very existence depends.

The truth which the new naval situation enforces is that British interests are not merely the interests of the United Kingdom. The British Empire may be compared to a block of flats which adjoins a powder magazine. Each flat has its separate tenant who enjoys complete freedom, with his own servants and his own domestic arrangements. When the question of fire insurance comes to be discussed, is

it imaginable that the whole cost of insurance should be borne by those tenants who happen to live on the side of the block adjoining the powder magazine? Would the other tenants urge that by providing a few fire-grenades they were doing as much as could be expected of them? Would it not be argued that if an explosion occurred, not one or two of the flats in the block, but the whole structure, would be razed to the ground? This is the situation to-day of the British Empire. It is true that the United Kingdom lives next to a powder magazine, but let there be no mistake about the peril for the whole Empire. If the powder magazine explodes, while the United Kingdom may feel the first shock, there is not an inhabitant of the oversea dominions who will not be affected.

The British Empire is an entity, or it does not exist. If it is an entity, then surely it is the duty of every component section to do its part in bearing the burden of defending that entity. If it is not a real confederation of self-governing peoples, then let this be declared now and at once, for only by such a declaration can the self-governing colonies save themselves from bearing in time of war the same horrors of defeat as must fall upon the United Kingdom once the Fleet has been annihilated. There is no middle course. The self-governing colonies cannot take advantage of the British Fleet when peace reigns, and then when war occurs claim that they stand outside the conflict. If under peace conditions they enjoy the blessings which British supremacy ensures, then if that supremacy is de-



throned they must be prepared to share the penalty of defeat.

The second fact which they can ignore only at their peril is that the battle of the British Empire will be fought, not in distant seas, but contiguous to the naval armaments of the great European Powers. Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa—the Indian Empire itself, and every inch of territory over which the British flag flies—are defended by the metropolitan fleets stationed in European waters. The truth of this statement calls for no proof. It is self-apparent that where the danger threatens, there the defence must be offered. Germany concentrates to-day every armoured ship, excepting two, most of her cruisers, and all her torpedo craft, in the North Sea and the Baltic, and it is Germany which aspires to colonial greatness. Meanwhile Austria and Italy are expanding their fleets in the Mediterranean.

The oversea dominions may play with the naval question to-day—they may create little fleets ; but when the great clash of arms comes those fleets will have no more influence upon the eventual course of events than the navies of Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and San Domingo. Is it imagined in any part of the British Empire that a few cruisers and torpedo-boat destroyers are going to stand between any oversea dominion and the designs of a great warlike Empire, with a Fleet costing between twenty and thirty millions annually, and an Army of about four million men upon a war footing ? The German Army contains seven or eight times as



many adult males as the whole of New Zealand ; it consists of at least three times as many men as are to be found in the whole of the Commonwealth, and even Canada itself has not within its boundaries half as many men as Germany could place under arms within six weeks of the opening of a war. If the German Fleet gains command of the sea, the German army can be transported anywhere to do anything.

### III. AN IMPERIAL SERVICE SQUADRON.

The danger is not immediate, but it is imminent. If the British Fleet fails at the hour of trial—whether that trial be war or the silent pressure of armaments behind the diplomatists in council—then the Empire will be in peril. The oversea Dominions can ensure that the British Fleet shall not fail, but if they are to take action in time they must at once realise the gravity of the situation which is developing. The First Lord of the Admiralty has made no secret of the danger. He has laid the facts before all the British peoples. “With every new development in continental navies,” he remarked on May 15th, 1912, “with every fresh squadron which takes the water abroad, with every step in the ceaseless accumulation of naval strength with which we are confronted, the world-wide mobility of the British Navy becomes restricted.” And he added these cogent words :

And here I think is the great opportunity, the great chance of the self-governing Dominions, those strong

young nations which have grown up all over the world under the shelter of the British flag and by the stimulus and protection of British institutions. And they have already begun to seize it. . . .

If the main developments of the last ten years have been the concentration of the British Fleet in decisive theatres, it seems to me, and I dare say it seems to you, not unlikely that the main naval developments of the next ten years will be the growth of effective naval forces in the great Dominions oversea. (Cheers.) Then we shall be able to make what I think will be found to be the true division of labour between the Mother Country and her daughter States—that we should maintain a sea supremacy against all comers at the decisive point and that they should guard and patrol all the rest of the British Empire.

I am certainly not going to attempt to forecast or to prescribe the exact form which these developments should take. But the march of opinion appears to be proceeding upon thoroughly practicable lines. This, however, I will venture to say. The Admiralty see no reason why arrangements should not be made to give to the Dominions a full measure of control over the movements in peace of any naval forces which, with our help, they may bring into efficient existence. We know that in war our countrymen over the seas will have only one wish, and that will be to encounter the enemy wherever the need and the danger is most severe. (Cheers.) The important thing is that the gap should be filled so that while we in the Old Country guard the decisive centre, our comrades and brothers across the seas shall keep the flag flying on the oceans of the world. (Cheers.)

This is the most direct invitation to the oversea Dominions which has been made by a British

Minister. The way is open. The need of the moment is apparent.

The Admiralty have felt compelled to withdraw the Atlantic Fleet from Gibraltar to strengthen the Home Fleets, and its place has been taken by the battleships now in the Mediterranean, hitherto based on Malta, and in an emergency there can be no doubt that these ships will reinforce the Home Fleets, since we shall otherwise have only 25 battleships fully manned at our average moment to the 29 which Germany can send to sea at her selected moment.\* This is apart from the ships with nucleus crews. If both countries complete these vessels to full strength, then we shall have 41 vessels and Germany will have 41 vessels, while we shall also have the eight ships of the Fourth Squadron—the Gibraltar ships—and sixteen older battleships, of which eight can be manned only after some delay, and the remaining eight after greater delay. In the new circumstances the Fourth Squadron will have to reinforce the Home Fleets, and then there will not be a single battleship outside northern waters, and the Mediterranean may be closed to us.

If the Dominions will make some sacrifice, the scheme of withdrawing the battleships from the Mediterranean—the road to Egypt, India, and the Antipodes—can be abandoned. We can place eight modern ships—preferably the eight Formidables—into these waters, with a due proportion of cruisers and torpedo craft, and when the need arises, Dreadnoughts can be despatched, if our kith

\* Cf. Chapter II, p. 55.

and kin will assist in providing an Imperial Service Squadron to be based on Gibraltar. This would be the "pivot force" of the Empire, protecting the entrance to the Channel, where the great trade routes of the Five Nations converge, protecting the entrance to the Mediterranean, and protecting also the lines of Atlantic trade—the trade from and to Canada, the United States, and South America. If the main strategical theatre in four or five years' time became the Pacific, then this squadron would steam south. Naval force is fluid; it can be moved rapidly and swiftly, so as to respond to policy. The squadron to perform this duty would have to be powerful and mobile—a force of unrivalled strength. It has been suggested\* that it might be composed as follows, its approximate cost being indicated:

Eight Dreadnought cruisers, each mounting eight 13.5in. guns and ten 6in. weapons, and with a speed of 28 knots. Crews (officers and men), 7,200; cost of ships, £16,500,000.

Twelve smaller cruisers, each mounting six 6in. guns, and with a speed of 25 knots. Crews (officers and men), 5,000. Cost of ships, £4,500,000.

Total crews, 12,000; total expenditure on ships, £21,000,000.

An annual payment of about £1,400,000 would cover interest, at 3 per cent., and such a proportion of capital as in twenty years would extinguish the capital cost.

The outlay on upkeep, including the pay of officers and men, and prospective non-effective charges, such as pensions, would be about £1,600,000 a year.

Consequently, for a sum of about £3,000,000 annually this fine squadron of eight Dreadnoughts and a dozen cruisers could be maintained, and at the end of twenty years—by which time their fighting value would have been greatly reduced—no debt upon them would remain.

\* *Daily Telegraph*, May 28th, 1912.

If the Dominion Parliaments have the will, they have the power to respond to this invitation without inflicting on their citizens an onerous burden. A scheme for the upkeep of the Imperial Service Squadron might be arranged if each nation agreed to pay some such sum as follows : Canada, £900,000 ; Australia, £700,000 ; New Zealand, £400,000 ; South Africa, £250,000 ; United Kingdom, £750,000. Total : £3,000,000.

Such payments, which would be accompanied by local economies, would not press unduly on the Colonial taxpayers, and by this expenditure the British peoples would be enabled to continue to keep the flag flying in the Atlantic and in the Mediterranean, and we could insure the safety of those ocean highways on which our welfare as five federated nations depends.

There is not a Dominion which, by its own effort, can make such a proportionate contribution to the strength of the Empire and to its security as these several payments represent. Australia is proposing to spend no less than £750,000 annually upon one armoured ship, three small cruisers, and a few torpedo craft. Last year the Dominion of Canada spent more than this sum on her " naval service," and neither she nor the Empire is the safer from attack, for not a modern man-of-war does she yet possess.

New Zealand has already responded to the Empire's need. She has given one Dreadnought cruiser for the general service of the Empire, and is making a payment of £100,000 annually in addition. She

has set a splendid example, and would no doubt come into such a scheme as is here outlined.

The one fact to be realised is that the problem of the naval defence of the Empire is entering upon a new phase. Hitherto it has been regarded as one for the consideration of the people of the United Kingdom only ; to-day it is coming to be realised, in face of an increasing peril to our supremacy, that it is a matter for the peoples of the United Empire. " For five centuries," the present Minister of Trade and Commerce in Canada has reminded his fellow-citizens, " the patient, toiling British taxpayer has paid the bill, and paid it with a cheerful countenance, and so far without grumbling." This is the bare truth. And this Colonial statesman added words which it is well to recall, for sometimes it is thought that our kinsmen do not realise what they owe to the Mother Country : " Can you find in the history of the world a more sublime figure and instrumentality of great and powerful good worked in so unselfish a way, and borne so cheerfully and unstintingly by the few millions of people who live in the islands of the North Sea ? To some," he added, " and I confess to myself, it is time, for very shame's sake, that we did something, and did something adequate." Now the opportunity occurs when the Dominions, enjoying to the full the privileges of nationhood, can take upon themselves some of the responsibilities of nationhood, helping, each according to its ability, to bear some share of the burden of Empire.

The stumbling-block hitherto has been the diffi-



culty of arranging that taxation for the provision of an Imperial Service Squadron, or other form of co-operative naval movement, shall carry with it some measure of representation. This difficulty can be easily removed. The experience of the Committee of Imperial Defence points to the solution of this new problem. The First Lord of the Admiralty has recently admitted that "the Admiralty see no reason why arrangements should not be made to give to the Dominions a full measure of control over the movements in peace of any naval forces which, with our help, they may bring into effective existence." Indeed, the matter would prove a comparatively simple one.

One solution would be the creation of an Imperial Naval Committee, on which the Admiralty would be represented by the First Lord, the First Sea Lord, and the Second Sea Lord, and possibly the Controller, who has to do with ship design and armament, and to which each Dominion would send a representative or representatives, according to the extent of its contributions. The Imperial Service Squadron would be under the general authority and control of the Board of the Admiralty, but its management, its cruises, and its general well-being under peace conditions would be watched over by the Imperial Naval Committee, which would act in an advisory capacity to the Admiralty, and as the connecting link between the Mother Country and the Dominions.

One of the most important functions of the Imperial Naval Committee, apart from the superintendence of finance, would be the arrangement of



the cruises of the ships. In order to enable them to carry out this duty the members would be kept by the Board of Admiralty in close touch with the movements of events abroad, and in this knowledge they would settle the itinerary of the Imperial Service Squadron. If the sky were clear, the vessels might cross the Atlantic to visit Quebec and Montreal, or they might make a world tour, showing the flag in Vancouver and in the great seaports of the Antipodes, and, it may be, calling at Durban and Cape Town. Indeed, this squadron's movements would be a new link between the Mother Country and the Dominions, advertising to the world the bonds of kinship uniting them, and in the summer these ships would share in the manœuvres of the Royal Navy.

The squadron would be Imperial in its composition and in its character. As officers and men from the Dominions were available, they would be passed into this force, and the balance would be supplied by the Admiralty. Service in these ships would be regarded as privileged service. Officers and men would have frequent opportunities of visiting all parts of the Empire, and the cruises would not merely provide unique professional training, but offer a continual reminder of the great political truth that the Mother Country and the Dominions are joined together by the seas far more closely and cheaply than the States of the United States or the several countries which now form the German Empire. The crews and the ships would be Imperial. Each Dominion would provide and actually own one or more of the vessels,

which would be held on lease by the Imperial Naval Committee for the Empire. The vessels would not be merged into the general service of the Royal Navy, but would be held distinct and separate.

The outstanding merits of such a scheme of co-operation for the defence of the whole Empire are many. This squadron would, under normal conditions, exert its influence where the great trade routes of the Empire converge, and would be the guardian of the entrance to the Mediterranean, the direct road to India and the Far East. At other times it would cruise far afield in the oceans of the world, showing the flag in the Atlantic and in the Pacific, and everywhere supporting British prestige and British trade. For many years to come the younger nations will need all their manhood for their internal development. They have labour in every field of activity requiring labourers, while we have labourers in tens of thousands requiring labour. We have the sea habit and all the machinery for creating sea power at a cheaper rate than any other country in the world. By co-operation we can pool what each nation can best spare for Imperial defence, and by so doing can, at a small sacrifice, make the Empire as a whole more secure.

This is a scheme of naval co-operation which can be advocated in the spirit of the larger patriotism. It has been received favourably by the leading papers in the oversea Dominions—and particularly by some of the principal newspapers in the Dominion of Canada. It would satisfy the natural desire of our kith and kin that they should have

some share in the control of the men-of-war for which they pay, it would not interfere with the general administration of the Admiralty and it would enable us to hold our traditional position in the Mediterranean and defend the trade routes. If the main strategical theatre became the Atlantic or the Pacific, then the base of the Imperial Service Squadron would be changed ; it would be a mobile force, responding instantly to the call of the international situation.

If the gravity of the situation which is developing in Europe were understood by the oversea dominions, if they could be brought to realise that the seas are all one and that our peril is also their peril, there would be no more talk of "baby navies"—mere hand fire-grenades. They would rise to the height of their Imperial responsibilities and rally to the support of the one instrument which can ensure to them a continuance of peace. Local navies, however generously they may be encouraged, can be of no war value to the Empire for fifteen, twenty, or more years, and the danger is in sight. The clouds which portend the storm are already black on the horizon ; should they burst it will be too late to proffer assistance because naval power, on which the issue of the struggle will mainly depend, unlike military power, cannot be improvised.

## CHAPTER IV.

### TRIUMPH OF THE DREADNOUGHT POLICY, 1905-12.

THE dominating factor to be kept in mind in facing the new naval situation is that in three or four years' time we shall have no numerical superiority in serviceable pre-Dreadnought battleships. "Our splendid fleet of pre-Dreadnoughts" will, by 1915, have shrunk, owing to the disappearance of obsolete ships, to very limited proportions, and every one will realise that the Dreadnought policy, which relegated pre-Dreadnoughts to the background, has been a triumph of British statesmanship and economy. The explanation of this apparent paradox is simple.

Between 1900 and the opening of what may be described as the Dreadnought era—the era of the all-big-gun ship—the number of battleships with mixed armaments laid down by the leading naval Powers was as follows :

	Number laid down between 1900 and 1906				
Great Britain . . . . .	..	..	..	..	15
Germany . . . . .	..	..	..	..	12
United States . . . . .	..	..	..	..	14
France . . . . .	..	..	..	..	11
Italy . . . . .	..	..	..	..	5
Austria . . . . .	..	..	..	..	6
Japan . . . . .	..	..	..	..	3

These are the only battleships (except Dreadnoughts) which will be less than fifteen years old in 1915. Age will have removed all the battleships built under the Naval Defence Act, and the Spencer programme and defective design condemned others not quite so old, and in more or less effective pre-Dreadnought ships we shall consequently have fallen to a One Power Standard, and our supremacy will rest on Dreadnoughts. For this statement ample evidence will be produced in the course of this survey of the naval situation.

### I. *The Danger of 1905—and the Escape.*

What was the situation in 1905, when the design of the Dreadnought was prepared and approved? The war in the Far East was drawing to a close. It was already apparent that Russia would emerge from the struggle practically denuded of all naval strength. Therefore the old basis upon which the Two Power Standard rested, namely, a 10 per cent. superiority in battleships over the next two greatest naval Powers, which for many years had been France and Russia, would no longer exist, and it was realised that for the future the fleet which would most powerfully influence British policy would be that of Germany. The German Navy Law of 1900 was about to be amended so as to increase the provision of large cruisers ; an agitation was already under way for a further acceleration of battleship construction, and this agitation eventually culminated in the further amending Act of 1908, which increased the number of battleships to be provided immediately

for the fleet. These two amendments would have raised the average expenditure of Germany for the period of 1908 to 1917 from £11,300,000 to £20,400,000—a growth of upwards of 80 per cent., and now a further remarkable expansion has been decided upon. With no unfriendly feeling, but merely in recognition of this new factor in the naval situation, the British authorities had to turn from the Russian fleet in its weakness and the French fleet already suffering from years of confused naval policy, to the consideration of the rapidly growing navies of Germany and, in a limited sense, the United States.

At this moment of extreme difficulty, the war in the Far East, happily for British sea power, shed a new light upon many naval problems, and in particular it showed that the decisive factor in a naval engagement was not, as had been supposed, the secondary armament of battleships—6-inch guns—but the primary armament of heavy weapons, 12-inch or larger guns. The aim of British policy, as soon as this truth was recognised, was to design a new type of battleship carrying the maximum number of 12-inch guns to bear upon the broadside. The war also illustrated the great strategical and tactical advantage of high speed, and further showed the necessity of strengthening the hulls of ships in order the better to resist torpedo attack.

Realising that the Dreadnought design was inevitable, the British Admiralty determined to lead the way and gain every possible naval and economic advantage. Having what was roughly a numerical



equality with the United States, on the one hand, and with Germany on the other, in modern mixed calibre ships, we re-asserted our superiority in all-big-gun ships, with the result that while at this moment we have 20 of the ships of the new type complete, Germany has 9, the United States 6, and France and the other Powers of Europe have none. The present situation attests the triumph of the Dreadnought, and conveys a gratifying assurance of present safety. Nevertheless, the situation in the years ahead, owing to the large number of vessels now building in foreign shipyards, is fraught with grave anxiety unless the British shipbuilding programmes are adequate to the new needs.

The essential character of the Dreadnought was not great size, or cost, but great hitting capacity, great speed, and great power of resistance to an enemy's attack on a limited displacement. Admiral of the Fleet Sir Gerard Noel has condemned, with some violence, the Dreadnought, because he is under the mistaken impression that this ship marked a great increase in displacement. If this officer would turn to any book of reference for 1905 he would see that before the Dreadnought of 17,900 tons was laid down, Japan had begun building two ships of 19,000 tons, Russia had in hand two ships of 17,200 tons, and the United States six vessels of over 16,000 tons--all of them ships with mixed armaments. Would he have had the Admiralty build smaller, and therefore less powerful, ships than these Powers? If not, where does the point of his accusation lie that the policy of introducing the Dreadnought was



“almost a cut-throat policy” ? It was assuredly, as will be shown conclusively, a policy of the highest and wisest statesmanship, which saved our naval ascendancy, and kept millions of pounds in the pockets of British taxpayers.

The outstanding feature of the Dreadnought was its gun-power and speed \* on a relatively small displacement. Hitherto, no modern battleship had been constructed carrying more than four big guns, or with a greater speed than  $18\frac{1}{4}$  knots. In the Dreadnought ten 12-inch weapons were mounted higher from the water, and therefore with a better command, in a ship with an armoured belt of greater resisting power, three knots more speed, and increased radius, her bunker capacity being sufficient to enable her to steam about 5,080 sea miles at economical speed, and about 3,000 sea miles at  $18\frac{1}{2}$  knots, after making allowance for bad weather, and a small amount of coal being left in the bunkers. Provision was also made for the storage of oil fuel, but this additional factor is not taken into account in estimating the radius of action, though it would, of course, greatly increase it. In order more adequately to protect the ship from underwater explosion, the hull was subdivided into an increased number of watertight compartments, and many other improvements were incorporated in the design.

It has been said, by way of criticism, that as soon

\* The latest Dreadnought battle-cruiser, *Lion*, has reached for a short period a speed of 31·7 knots, equivalent to over 36 land miles an hour. The vessel and the others of the same general type are far better armoured than most pre-Dreadnought battleships.

as the details of the Dreadnought design became known, the ship was the subject of widespread "advertisement" in this country, and that foreign Powers were irritated by boasts that this vessel rendered all existing battleships obsolete. Lord Charles Beresford, in particular, has reiterated this complaint, while himself admitting the excellence of the Dreadnought type, the advantages of the rough design of which he himself had "advertised" at the Royal United Service Institution as early as February 2nd, 1902, three and a half years before the ship was begun, when he said :

We have too many sorts of guns in our ships. I was talking the matter over with my Commander-in-Chief—Lord Fisher—the other day, and he used the best expression I have ever heard on the point. He said : "What we want in our ships is the biggest smallest gun and the smallest biggest gun." I entirely agree with him. I would have those two laid in the ship and not have the great diversity of armament that we have at present.

At the same time he pointed out :

It is a very old naval expression that speed now is the weather gauge. It enables you to get into the position of advantage, if you know anything about a fleet. . . . As far as handling a fleet goes, speed is the first consideration ; when once you get into a position of advantage and have anything at all like a head on your shoulders, you ought never to let the enemy get out of the position of disadvantage, and that you can ensure if you have speed.

These features were embodied by Lord Fisher in

the Dreadnought design in 1905, and we thus obtained great hitting power and "the weather gauge."

## II. *The Effect of the Dreadnought's Construction.*

In the light of the knowledge which we now possess, it is difficult to see how human nature in British breasts could have been restrained from a certain measure of satisfaction at the *coup* which the Admiralty achieved when the Dreadnought and her swift sisters were laid down in secrecy. At the moment the performance was regarded as a stroke of craft and statesmanship unparalleled in naval annals. It is now apparent that, in fact, the introduction of the Dreadnought was not merely an excellent stroke of policy, but it represented the triumph of the British naval authorities over a combination of disquieting, adverse circumstances. At the time our naval power rested mainly upon the very large number of ships which had been built under the Naval Defence Act of 1889 and under the Spencer programme. Those ships in 1905 were becoming obsolete, and it was realised that either they must be replaced within the next few years or our naval supremacy would be a thing of the past. Heavy arrears were accumulating. As a result of a very careful consideration of all the factors of the situation, the Dreadnought and her three swifter sisters were laid down. What was the effect upon foreign rivalry?

(1) For over eighteen months the design of armoured ships in foreign countries ceased,

because details of our new types were kept secret, while the British shipyards were engaged in the construction of the Dreadnought and the three Invincibles, and their younger sisters.

(2) Simultaneously with the appearance of the Dreadnought, the pre-Dreadnought ships then in hand in foreign yards became obsolescent. It is true the same depreciation was inflicted upon the vessels in hand for the British Navy, but the effect at home was slight in comparison with that upon foreign construction. The British Fleet had in hand only 7 ships, 5 of the King Edward class of 16,350 tons and the Lord Nelson and Agamemnon of 16,500 tons; on the other hand, the United States had under construction 13 vessels; Germany, 8; France, 6; Russia, 5; Italy, 4; and Japan, 2. *While the Dreadnought affected injuriously the value of seven British vessels then under construction, it relegated to the background thirty-eight ships then building for the six other great Powers of the world.*

(3) By this courageous stroke of policy, the Admiralty avoided the necessity of making up the arrears of armoured shipbuilding which were mounting up. Instead of replacing the obsolescent British battleships with vessels ranking *pari passu* with the men-of-war with mixed armaments then building in foreign yards, it practically "cleaned the slate" and started upon a fresh basis with a type of ship so immensely superior as a fighting machine to anything which had been known hitherto that at once foreign naval depart-

ments were paralysed. And thus the British Fleet regained by one stroke of policy the naval supremacy which it was in serious danger of losing.

(4) The introduction of the Dreadnought consequently effected a vast saving, since we wiped out arrears in the construction of mixed armament ships which otherwise would have had to be made up, and we were enabled to begin afresh with a start of about eighteen months over all rivals.

The extent of the arrears of shipbuilding which would have had to be made good if the new type had not been introduced is apparent from the following statement, showing the naval programmes of Great Britain and Germany since the year 1897-8, when the first of the German Navy Acts was introduced :

		GREAT BRITAIN					GERMANY			
		Battleships	Armoured Cruisers	Protected Cruisers	Destroyers	Torpedo-boats	Battleships	Armoured Cruisers	Protected Cruisers	Destroyers
Mixed Armament period.	1897-8	4	4	3	6	—	1	—	2	6
	1898-9	7	8	1	12	—	2	1	2	6
	1899-1900	2	2	1	—	2	3	—	2	6
	1900-1	2	6	1	5	2	2	—	2	6
	1901-2	3	6	2	10	5	2	1	3	6
	1902-3	2	2	*6	9	4	2	1	3	6
	1903-4	5	4	*4	15	—	2	1	2	6
	1904-5	2	3	—	—	—	2	1	3	6
	1905-6	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	3	6
		27	35	18	57	13	18	6	22	54

(The Dreadnought period opened in Germany 18 months later than in England.)

Dreadnought period.	1905-6	-	-	4	—	—	6	12	—	—	—	—
	1906-7	-	-	3	—	—	2	12	2	1	3	12
	1907-8	-	-	3	—	1	5	12	3	—	2	12
	1908-9	-	-	2	—	6	16	—	4	—	2	12
	1909-10	-	-	8	—	6	20	—	4	—	2	12
	1910-11	-	-	5	—	5	20	—	4	—	2	12
	1911-12	-	-	5	—	4	20	—	4	—	2	12
	1912-13	-	-	4	—	*8	20	—	2	—	2	12
				34†	—	30	109 36†		23‡	1	15	84
								145				

During the same period, 1897-1905, the American Congress authorised the construction of 18 battleships.

\* Eight scouts—small cruisers—were laid down in 1902 and 1903, and the cruisers of the 1912-13 were designated "light armoured cruisers."

† These 36 craft are small destroyers, and were built as such.

‡ These totals include battle cruisers.

Consequently at the date when the Dreadnought was designed, Germany had built or was building 12 mixed armament battleships authorised since 1900, while the United States had 14, or a total of 26 for the next two naval Powers, as compared with 14 for the British Fleet.

### III. *The pre-Dreadnought Fleets.*

By one single act—the construction of the Dreadnought—the British Admiralty so seriously depreciated the value of the new foreign battleships, ships with mixed armaments, that in 1915 they will be of practically negligible importance, for at that date only Dreadnoughts will figure in the first line of any of the fleets of the world, and the pre-Dread-

nought ships, though so many of them under foreign flags are of comparatively modern construction, will be definitely relegated to the reserve.

In 1915 the pre-Dreadnought battleships of military value in the four leading fleets will comprise :

*Great Britain.*

No. of Ships.		Class.		Tons.
8 (a)	..	Formidable	..	120,000
8	..	King Edward VII.	..	130,800
2	..	Lord Nelson	..	33,000
<hr/>				
18				283,800

*Germany.*

5 (b)	..	Wittelsbach	..	58,000
5	..	Braunschweig	..	65,000
5	..	Deutschland	..	66,000
<hr/>				
15				189,000

*United States.*

5	..	Georgia	..	74,740
6	..	Connecticut	..	96,000
2 (c)	..	Idaho	..	26,000
<hr/>				
13				196,740

*France.*

5	..	Patrie	..	73,250
6	..	Danton	..	108,000
<hr/>				
11				181,250



(a) Some of these ships will be old in 1915, but they have been included because of their high fighting value, while three later ships—the “Swiftsure,” “Triumph,” and “Albemarle,” though laid down some time later, have been omitted because in 1915 they will be almost worthless, owing to their weak armour protection. The King Edward VII. class are weak in their armament, some of the guns being too near the water.

(b) It is questionable whether these five small ships, with no heavier weapon than the 9.4 inch gun, will be of great value in 1915, though they are well armoured.

(c) These two ships will be of slight value in 1915.

The British Navy will have an advantage in these mixed armament battleships in tons displacement owing to the larger size of individual ships, but the balance will not be considerable, and for all practical purposes we shall be down to a One Power Standard.

#### IV. *The Economy of the Dreadnought Policy.*

It may be said—it has indeed frequently been mentioned—by way of criticism, that the Dreadnought has involved this country in very heavy additional naval expenditure. A few figures will show conclusively that this statement rests upon no foundation. The simplest way of indicating the influence of the Dreadnought policy upon British naval expenditure is to take the official figures of the average total naval expenditure and the average sums expended in shipbuilding in the five years prior to the building of the Dreadnought and in the five years since the Dreadnought was laid down :

*Average Expenditure 1901-1905.*

		Total Expenditure. £		Cost of New Construction £
Great Britain	..	33,541,458	..	11,415,058
Germany	..	10,276,000	..	4,540,127
United States	..	18,733,134	..	6,108,550
France	..	12,665,893	..	4,864,858

*Average Expenditure 1906-1910.\**

Great Britain	..	34,248,453	..	10,735,188
Germany	..	16,731,555	..	8,098,739
United States	..	25,179,213	..	6,548,750
France	..	13,181,337	..	4,495,993

There is no trace in these figures of that terrible burden of expenditure in which the Dreadnought is supposed in some quarters to have involved us. In the five years after the beginning of the Dreadnought we actually spent less on new ships than in the five preceding years, though the outlay of rivals increased —German expenditure being nearly doubled.

Another indication of the economy effected by the introduction of the Dreadnought is to be found in a consideration of the cost of the British pre-Dreadnoughts and British Dreadnoughts. Every ton of a man-of-war represents a measure of fighting strength. The cost per ton of the latest pre-Dreadnoughts and of the Dreadnoughts has been as follows :

\* If 1911 is included, the average for the six years—1906-11—for new construction are : British, £11,873,803 ; German, £8,692,425 ; American, £6,347,923 ; France, £4,742,771.

Class.				Cost per Ton. £
King Edward	..	Pre-Dreadnought	..	93
Lord Nelson	..	„	..	100
Dreadnought	..	Dreadnought	..	101
Invincible	..	„	..	101
Bellerophon	..	„	..	93
St. Vincent	..	„	..	88
Orion	..	„	..	83

These figures show that we are buying our fighting power more cheaply per ton to-day owing to the introduction of the Dreadnought type than we were before, and, moreover, we are buying it cheaper than any other Power in the world.

Lord Brassey recently suggested that we were paying more for our men-of-war than other countries. It would be surprising, in view of the economic conditions in this country and abroad, if this were true, and it would tax Lord Brassey's powers, as an advocate of Free Trade, to explain away such a remarkable anomaly—it if existed. As a matter of fact, the relative cost per ton of the latest ships of the Dreadnought type built and building in this country and abroad is as follows :

				£
Great Britain (Orion)	..	..	..	83
Germany (Thuringen)	..	..	..	100
United States (Utah)	..	..	..	87
France (Danton)	..	..	..	122
Italy (Cavour)	..	..	..	118

The cheapness of British shipbuilding is a necessary

corollary to the excellence of the organisation of industry in this country and to the unrivalled output which is necessary in order to maintain the supremacy of the world's largest fleet.

Not only are British Dreadnoughts cheap as to first cost, but they are cheap also in maintenance—far cheaper than the less powerful pre-Dreadnoughts. During the discussion of the Navy Estimates in 1911, the late First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. McKenna, gave official figures which show conclusively the continuing economic advantage of the Dreadnought policy. He said :

The Dreadnoughts, the eight battleships now in commission, cost £1,710,000 apiece. The cost of those eight battleships is precisely the same to build as the cost of nine King Edwards.

But the upkeep of the eight Dreadnoughts costs £50,000 less a year than the upkeep of the nine King Edwards. Let any hon. member ask any distinguished admiral he likes whether he would rather command a fleet of eight Dreadnoughts or of nine King Edwards, and I should be surprised if he did not say that he would prefer to have the eight Dreadnoughts, with their possible 80 12-inch guns, their speed of 21 knots, and their very considerable armour protections, to the nine King Edwards, mounting 36 12-inch guns with a very much lower speed.

The *Army and Navy Gazette*, commenting upon this statement, remarked that " There can be but one answer to this question of preference in regard to the types, and, in fact, if the nine King Edwards were increased to twelve, we doubt whether any

admiral would be willing to take them into action instead of eight Dreadnoughts. But, by preferring the latter, as Mr. McKenna went on to remind the House, he would be saving the country £50,000 a year as well. Compared in the same way, the Dreadnoughts show a similar advantage over the Lord Nelsons. A total of thirty Lord Nelsons could be built for the cost of twenty-nine Dreadnoughts, but they would cost £15,000 a year more to maintain than the latter vessels."

#### V. *The Naval Position.*

As to the present position of the British Fleet, there is no possibility of cavil. It is extremely easy to produce sophisticated statistics to prove almost anything, but it will be impossible for any alarmist to paint a picture of naval peril at present from the materials at command. But in spite of the satisfactory standing of the British Fleet to-day, the position will be one of considerable peril unless adequate provision is made for new ships in the immediate future. During the next few years the British Navy will shed almost all the old vessels which were built prior to the beginning of the present century, and thus its strength will be materially reduced. In pre-Dreadnought battleships it will have little superiority over either Germany, the United States, or France. "Our splendid fleet of pre-Dreadnoughts" will have diminished, as it was bound to diminish owing to the effluxion of time. If the Dreadnought had not been built in 1905, we should have had to replace these ships

with ships of more or less the same character, and these ships would have ranked *pari passu* with the thirty-nine modern pre-Dreadnought battleships of the German, American, and French fleets. By the introduction of the Dreadnought, the Admiralty definitely and finally departed from the old designs, and consequently we are in the fortunate position of not having to replace the pre-Dreadnoughts—a vast economy.

The immediate responsibility which rests upon the Admiralty is the comparatively limited one of laying down sufficient ships of the new type to neutralise the ships of the new type which are being built abroad, or will be laid down in the coming years. This carries with it the inevitable disadvantage that in 1915 and the succeeding years we shall possess practically no numerical advantage in effective pre-Dreadnoughts, but this will be a matter of small importance, because, owing to the rapid development of naval design, the pre-Dreadnoughts of foreign fleets, in spite of their comparative modernity, will hardly be taken into account in comparisons of naval strength. In a very interesting paper which he read before the Institution of Naval Architects in 1911, Professor J. J. Welch made a most valuable comparison between the fighting weight of the pre-Dreadnoughts and Dreadnoughts. He gave a mass of statistics, showing the weight of the battle broadside of typical vessels of the British, German, American, Japanese, French, and Russian fleets. The following figures are quoted from Professor Welch's paper :

# 108 THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

Class				Weight of Battle Broadside. Lbs.	Lbs. of Shell per Ton Displace- ment.
GREAT BRITAIN					
Duncan	...	...	Pre-Dreadnought	4,000	'29
King Edward	...	...	"	4,460	'27
Lord Nelson	...	...	"	5,300	'32
Dreadnought	...	...	Dreadnought	6,800	'38
Neptune	...	...	"	8,500	'42
Orion	...	...	"	12,500	'56
GERMANY					
Wittelsbach	...	...	Pre-Dreadnought	2,100	'22
Braunschweig	...	...	"	3,830	'29
Deutschland	...	...	"	3,830	'29
Nassau	...	...	Dreadnought	6,030	'33
Helgoland	...	...	"	9,400	'43
UNITED STATES					
Georgia	...	...	Pre-Dreadnought	5,670	'38
Connecticut	...	...	"	5,510	'34
Michigan	...	...	Dreadnought	6,960	'43
Delaware	...	...	"	8,700	'43
Arkansas	...	...	"	10,440	'40
JAPAN					
Pre-Dreadnoughts...	...	...	(various)	3,900-5,00	'31-'32
Satsuma	...	...	Dreadnought	6,400	'33
Aki	...	...	"	6,800	'34
Settsu	...	...	"	7,300	'35
FRANCE					
Patrie	...	...	Pre-Dreadnought	3,900	'27
Danton	...	...	"	6,130	'34
Jean Bert	...	...	Dreadnought	9,700	'42
RUSSIA					
Pre-Dreadnoughts...	...	...	(various)	3,410-4,300	'25-'30
Sebastopol	...	...	Dreadnought	8,640	'37

Professor Welch, in his interesting paper, added :

Remembering that in recent years tacticians have increasingly emphasised the necessity for good broadside fire, it has been considered that the ratio given fairly measures relative gun power. The increase in the ratio of weight of broadside fire to displacement, noted in the



more recent ships, depends in the first place on the increased number of large guns now installed, as well as upon the increase of calibre ; but it is also affected by the now usual method of mounting all these guns on the centre line, so that the whole of these weapons are available on either broadside. It must be remembered that the later guns can be fired more rapidly than those of the earlier type, so that a comparison of weight of broadside fire does not completely represent the improvement of gun installation in later, as compared with earlier, vessels.

The most casual examination of the tables shows how greatly the size of individual battleships has developed, with corresponding advantages in speed and gun power ; and the rapidity of the advance may be gauged by the fact that not more than seven years ago a distinguished admiral remarked in this room : “ We have talked about 18,000-ton ships, but I venture to think that an 18,000-tons ship would be a mistake.” The table shows that there are already in existence vessels of much greater displacement than that deprecated by the gallant admiral, and there is no distinct indication that the limit has yet been reached.

Thus, within the last ten years, British battleships have increased 60 per cent. in displacement, 35 per cent. in length, and about 17 per cent. in breadth ; the speed has been increased by over 2 knots, whilst the weight of metal discharged per broadside has risen from 4000 lbs. to 12,500 lbs., an increase of over 200 per cent. The new type of cruiser-battleships, too, has developed, until it now includes the “ Lion ” and “ Princess Royal,” vessels of 26,350 tons displacement, each having a length of 600 ft. between perpendiculars, and a speed of 28 knots. The same tendency is as strongly marked in other navies ; in the United States, for example, the displacement of

battleships has been more than doubled within the last ten years, the speed has been increased by three knots, and the weight of metal thrown per broadside—taking the latest available information—has been increased practically 225 per cent. In the German Navy, too, the displacement of the battleship has been about doubled within the period under review, and the weight of metal discharged per broadside has increased by about 260 per cent.

As to the reasons leading to the rapid advance in size in ships, the order of development seems to be somewhat as follows : As a result of the increasing radius of action of the torpedo, and of the great increase in accuracy of gun fire due to improved training of gunners and increased efficiency of apparatus, it was realised that future naval battles would be fought at much greater ranges than obtained in the past, and that under such circumstances the projectiles from smaller guns than the 12-in. would be relatively inefficient against armour. To make up, in the newer vessels, for the lighter guns hitherto carried, it was necessary to instal more 12-in. weapons than the four which had been usual for many years. To do this to the extent desired necessitated increase of size, particularly in the direction of length, although additional beam was also called for to ensure the requisite stability with the increased top weight. Increase of length is especially favourable to speed, and thus it was possible to make simultaneously a distinct advance in speed without undue increase of machinery weights, particularly as this advance coincided with the introduction, on a large scale, of the turbine for marine purposes, by which means much larger powers could be installed than could with equal convenience be developed in reciproacting engines.

Professor Welch's figures and statements carry

the most convincing proof of the slight value which will attach to pre-Dreadnoughts in 1915, when there will be about one hundred Dreadnoughts in commission in the world's fleets. At that date battleships with mixed armaments, and therefore weak primary armaments, will be a negligible quantity, and it will be apparent to the most cursory student of naval policy that when the Admiralty laid down the Dreadnought and rendered the large proportion of modern foreign pre-Dreadnoughts obsolescent, they inaugurated a policy, not of extravagance, but of economy. For all practical purposes the later Dreadnoughts have wiped out of existence the ships of foreign fleets with their weak broadside fire. From 1915 onwards only Dreadnoughts will seriously count, and it is by Dreadnoughts that British supremacy must be maintained.

The outlook is grave, owing to the large number of improved Dreadnoughts now under construction in foreign shipyards. Without going into unnecessary detail, it may be sufficient to set out the actual strength of the British and German fleets at the end of this and the two subsequent years and in the spring of 1915, showing the proportion of British over German strength.\*

\* There is every reason, at the time of writing, to anticipate that Germany in the present year will begin two Dreadnoughts, and in that case she will have 23 complete in 1915, as compared with the British 34. This will represent a British superiority of less than 48 per cent., whereas the only standard of safety, in view of the position of the British Empire and its dependence on the sea, is 100 per cent., or Two Keels to One.

	Actual Strength.				Percentage of	
	British.		German.		British over	German Strength.
End of 1912 ..	..	20	..	13	..	53.8
End of 1913 ..	..	25	..	17	..	47.0
End of 1914 ..	..	30	..	21	..	42.8
End of 1915 ..	..	34*	..	23	..	47.8

At the last date, the United States will have 12 Dreadnoughts complete, Japan 8, and France, Russia, Austria, and Italy, 4 each; while Brazil and Spain will possess 3 each; and Argentina, Chili, and Turkey, 2 each; or a total for the whole world of 105.

The Admiralty apparently intend to utilise pre-Dreadnoughts in the Fourth Squadron based on Gibraltar, at the very entrance to the Mediterranean, even as late as three years hence, when Austria and Italy will have eight Dreadnoughts in commission, and that they will trust to the French Fleet to readjust the naval balance. This will amount to an abandonment of our naval pre-eminence on the route to the Far East, India, and Australia, and it will presumably lead to the present *Double Entente* with France being changed into practically an alliance with the costly and disturbing military obligations on the Continent of Europe which such an alliance will involve. In effect, it will amount to this—that the Government will provide a smaller fleet than would be necessary if England still occupied a position of splendid isolation, while at the same time she, a maritime Power, will pledge herself to provide increased military force which

\* This excludes the battle-cruisers Australia and New Zealand.

could be employed on the Continent of Europe in support of French aims. This is a matter of high policy. It cannot be discussed within the limits of this survey of the naval situation. But now and here it should be distinctly emphasised that a policy of this character, accompanied by a relative decline of British naval strength *vis-à-vis* to Germany, is fraught with the gravest peril not only to the people of the United Kingdom, dependent for their very food and for their raw materials upon the freedom of the seas, but to the existence of the British Empire.

Fortunately the British position in cruisers and torpedo craft gives little occasion for anxiety. From the figures prepared by the American Intelligence Department, it is apparent that at present we have more modern cruisers and torpedo craft than any two Powers. On the other hand, the table of British construction given on pages 99-100 indicates that a large number of these cruisers and torpedo craft are well advanced in age, and must be replaced in the immediate future.

The amount of money which need be devoted in the immediate future to the construction of cruisers will be limited in extent owing to the influence which the introduction of the Dreadnought has had upon the plans of foreign Powers. According to the last returns of shipbuilding, the pressure of Dreadnought construction upon the exchequers of the world has been so great that most foreign Powers have practically abandoned the building of cruisers. All the naval Powers, except Great Britain and

Germany, have for the time being ceased to construct cruisers, and to this extent the danger to British commerce is reduced. But at the same time additional ships must be built for duty upon the trade routes and for Imperial purposes. Mr. Winston Churchill, speaking at the annual dinner of the Incorporated Chambers of Commerce in 1907, when he was Under Secretary for the Colonies, stated :

There are a score of things for which we do not require first-class battleships or cruisers, but for which, nevertheless, we need urgently a squadron of ships of some sort or other. What I hope the Government may be able to effect is the institution of a squadron of vessels that might discharge all those patrol and other duties absolutely necessary to the efficiency and dignified conduct of the administration of an Empire so wide as ours.

Now that Mr. Churchill is First Lord of the Admiralty business men and our kinsmen overseas will watch with interest to see the manner in which he will interpret in naval terms this declaration of policy.

Future shipbuilding programmes will also have to make provision for an additional number of torpedo craft. Last financial year the Admiralty laid down 20 destroyers and 6 submarines ; in the present year, since Germany will begin at least 12 destroyers and about 10 submarines, a large British programme of torpedo craft had to be faced, and it may be hoped that, in view of the dramatic success achieved by the latest type of submarine, the Board of Admiralty will have the courage to devote more



attention in coming years to these craft, even if this policy involves, for financial reasons, some reduction in the number of destroyers laid down. The submarine is the most effective and decisive defence against the invasion bogey which from time to time frightens the British people, and which might, in a period of grave international disquiet, deflect the defence policy of the country from its proper expression in action, as occurred, for instance, when the plans of the authorities in the United States had to be recast, owing to the fears of the people on the Atlantic coast of depredations by Spanish cruisers.

It is in the light of these facts, and not of the present satisfactory standing of the British Fleet, that the naval position must be examined. We have an ample margin to-day, but the Admiralty's proposals in future years will have to be based on the conditions which will exist in the years ahead—in 1915, in 1916, and so on. By 1915 we shall have in our sea-goings fleet 34 Dreadnoughts, Germany 23, Russia, Austria, Italy, France, and the United States, at least 28, or 34 if we include the 6 Dantons of France. If this is not a grave outlook in view of the kaleidoscopic changes which are so apt to occur in the groupings of the Powers and the rapidity with which storm clouds gather, what adjective can be applied to it? Nor can the building of further cruisers and torpedo craft be avoided. The *personnel* must also be increased.

It is apparent that, even if there were to be no



renewed naval activity abroad—and Germany has adopted a new programme full of grave menace—the outlook is one which flatly negatives any hope of naval economy.

Since the present century began, national revenue has been forced up by forty-two millions sterling—from £110,500,000 in 1900 to nearly £177,000,000 in 1912. It is still rising, and all who are concerned for the maintenance of our unquestionable supremacy upon the seas must experience serious misgivings as to the influence of the present extravagance, in the form of new and increasing permanent charges, upon the Navy Estimates when the inevitable period of trade depression occurs, and the receipts of the Exchequer fall below the present high level. So far the millions of economy secured by the Dreadnought policy have been "earmarked" for social reform, but we must not forget that an unchallengeable fleet is vital to poor and rich alike.

# PERSONNEL OF THE PRINCIPAL NAVIES.

Year	Great Britain	Germany	France	Russia	Italy	Austria-Hungary	United States	Japan
1901	.. 117,116	31,157	53,324	61,503	26,750	9,069	33,351	—
1902	.. 121,870	33,542	53,247	62,709	26,948	9,391	37,426	30,412
1903	.. 125,948	35,834	52,966	64,393	26,994	10,277	41,805	32,810
1904	.. 130,490	38,128	52,559	69,856	26,994	10,469	45,398	33,541
1905	.. 127,667	40,843	54,549	71,527	27,492	11,989	50,049	—
1906	.. 127,431	43,654	57,108	59,822	28,000	13,099	50,295	39,682
1907	.. 127,228	46,936	57,461	55,343	28,476	13,133	51,942	41,777
1908	.. 127,909	50,531	57,035	44,949	29,571	14,053	54,867	46,443
1909	.. 127,968	53,946	57,351	46,845	30,613	14,954	58,827	47,240
1910	.. 131,000	57,373	58,595	46,885	30,613	16,148	61,890	44,311
1911	.. 134,000	60,805	58,649	46,655	30,587	17,277	62,283	49,389

## CHAPTER V.

### THE NAVY'S NEED OF MEN.

**I**N naval discussions attention is devoted almost exclusively to the provision of additional ships for the Fleet. But battles are won not by ships, but by men. In an emergency even the largest armoured vessels can be completed for sea in about two years. It takes more than twice as long to train an efficient gunner or torpedo-man, and rather over seven years to educate a responsible junior officer from the day when he enters Osborne Naval College as a raw cadet.

At such times as these, when our sea supremacy is challenged, a great deal is heard of our needs in the matter of ships, and there is always the danger that the essential element of officers and men will be forgotten. There are half a dozen organisations which are always ready to raise an agitation in favour of more ships of all classes, because the popular idea of naval power is distinctly based on materiel ; the persistent cry is " Ships, ships, ships." There is still a widespread impression that at a few months' notice at most the Admiralty can obtain, by some indefinite method of compulsion, the requisite number of men for the Fleet. The fact, on the contrary, is that the naval authorities can secure as many ships as are required within reason in twenty-four to thirty-six months, but, under no

circumstances of pressure, however extreme, can efficient and well-trained officers and men be obtained in anything like the same period to fight them. Any missionary who would go forth on a pilgrimage throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom preaching the fundamental truth that naval supremacy depends not upon ships exclusively, but upon ships and trained officers and men and a war organisation elaborated in time of peace, would be doing more to safeguard our supremacy of the sea than all the Navy Leagues and defence associations in existence. Man is still greater than the instruments he fashions. Man evolved the steel hull which has replaced first wood and then iron. Man devised the reciprocating steam engine, which replaced sails, has now perfected the turbine, and is developing the internal combustion engine for marine purpose. Man invented the wonderful process of hardening steel into armour. Man experimented, year after year, until he at last obtained the marvellous 13.5-inch gun of to-day, which can throw a projectile of 1400 lbs. with sufficient velocity to penetrate 22 inches of armour at a distance of about two miles. Man, after patient research, has succeeded in devising an automobile torpedo, in itself as complete a man-of-war as the Dreadnought, capable of carrying a charge of over 300 lbs. of gun cotton at a speed of 27 miles an hour under the water and, running as true as the compass, hitting an objective at a distance of over four and a half miles. Man has triumphed over all the forces of nature, and in a modern warship has

pressed steam, electricity, hydraulics, and pneumatics into his service.

Much has been heard of what has been styled "the materiel school" in the Navy; it does not exist. The history of modern naval power is the history of the triumph of man over materiel and not the triumph of materiel over man. In the old wars all these latent forces lay to the hand of the great sailors, but they had not yet learnt how to conquer them. In process of time the secrets which were then hidden have been revealed by man's research and industry, and the greatest danger which threatens our naval supremacy to-day is the popular impression that ships are of prime importance and that it is upon the provision of these that public attention should be concentrated at a time of crisis such as is now approaching. The cry is always for ships, more ships. The more intelligent of those who participate in naval agitations take it for granted probably that if they can compel the Government to bend before a popular demand for an increased number of men-of-war, the Admiralty, on its part, will take corresponding action to see that officers and men are provided in time for manning the ships.

There is, however, no justification for this complacency. The Board of Admiralty is after all only one department of the State, under the control of the Government of the day, and its policy is subservient to the financial policy of the party in power. Since the popular mind is impressed by the mere fact of building ships, and little or no credit attaches to a Government which devotes its atten-

tion to other essential features of naval administration, including the manning of the Fleet, the temptation to build ships and to economise by refraining to make adequate provision to fight them has frequently proved irresistible. Even as recently as 1889, the Government of that day introduced a Naval Defence Act, which made provision for the construction of men-of-war representing a capital value of twenty-one millions sterling, and absolutely no provision was made for manning these new ships of war. When at last they were completed and ready to pass into the Fleet, it was discovered that they could not be placed in commission because officers and men were wanting. Thus it happened that the Admiralty were forced to tempt young officers of the mercantile marine to enter the Navy, under limited conditions as to pay and promotion—conditions provocative eventually of unlimited discontent—and the United Kingdom was also scoured for youths too old to undergo the ordinary long service training, but capable of being passed through a short course of instruction before being drafted to sea to make good the serious deficiency in seamen which had arisen. In the light of past naval crises, it is unsafe to take for granted the assurance that any Government, whatever its political complexion, will, in bringing forward a programme of shipbuilding, take the necessary steps to provide the officers and men without whom the vessels cannot put to sea as effective men-of-war.

In the old days, before man had triumphed over materiel and the ship of war had become a compli-

cated box of interdependent mechanical contrivances, the problem of manning the Fleet was far less difficult than to-day. Even in the Napoleonic period naval warfare did not approximate to an exact science. At that time we did not possess a continuous service system, because the routine of life at sea was so simple, and the duties devolving upon the sailors, though arduous, so rudimentary that any man, tinker, tailor, masterman, thief, who could be cajoled or forced to set foot upon a warship could be transformed in a short time into a reputable man-of-war's man. Times have changed. It has been well remarked as a fact notable in naval history that up to the battle of St. Vincent nearly every victory went to the side which had the most ships, while since then it has gone to the side which, from causes antecedent to the battle, had the best trained personnel. In the battle of Trafalgar the French and Spanish were untrained, it was the same with the Chinese at Yalu, the Spaniards at Manilla and Santiago, and lastly it was the same with the Russians in the Far East, when perfection of training and a high standard of intelligence gave to the Japanese their series of comparatively easy victories at sea. The secret of victory is to be found, not in the number or excellence of the ships on either side—though the best ships are only just good enough, and there cannot be too many ships if annihilation and not victory is still our ideal, as it was Nelson's—but in the character and training and *esprit de corps* of the officers and men who man them.

It must be recognised to their credit that during the



recent period of rigid economy—1904-9—when the Government was endeavouring by its example to arrest the rivalries of the Powers in naval armaments, the present Board of Admiralty fought against the temptation to adopt the old short-sighted device of cutting down the regular personnel of the Fleet. In those five years the expenditure upon the Fleet was reduced by an aggregate sum of nearly £27,000,000. Of this amount only £11,000,000 was due to the reduction in the votes for new construction, and the remainder, a sum of £16,000,000, was attributable to the reforms which were initiated during the period when Lord Selborne was at the head of the Admiralty and called to his aid as First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Sir John—now Lord—Fisher. The saving on the shipbuilding was a temporary economy, because the money which was unspent in the period indicated had to be provided in the subsequent years, since the challenge to naval economy, in which Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had firm faith, was not taken up by rival Powers, and was, indeed, flouted by Germany. But this did not apply to the other economies amounting to £16,000,000. They were due to an improved method of administration and the elimination of wasteful channels of expenditure. During former periods of economy, the Admiralty had permitted expenditure on the personnel of the Fleet to be reduced; on this occasion the Board adopted the wise policy of building up the personnel. The contrast is best perceived by comparing the sums spent in 1904 and in 1912 under the various votes which

# 124 THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

are concerned with the personnel :

	1904	1912
Numbers voted .. ..	131,000	136,000
Wages, etc., of officers and men	£6,785,785	£7,801,500
Victualling and clothing ..	2,410,030	3,359,437
Educational services ..	137,745	218,885
Royal Naval Reserve ..	378,879	436,432

In these years the whole scheme of manning the Navy was changed. The number of regular officers and men was increased and the allowances and pensions of the lower deck were improved, while at the same time reforms were introduced in the regulations governing the clothing and victualling votes which secured to the men many advantages.

This, however, is only half the tale. While the regular personnel of the Fleet was slightly increased, there was a great expansion in the trained reserves. The change may be thus explained; comparative summary :

## RESERVISTS PERIODICALLY TRAINED.

	1898	1912
Royal Naval Reserve (merchant, sailors, fishermen, etc., trained in 1898 at shore batteries, but now in sea-going ships) .. ..	27,600	21,534
Royal Fleet Reserve (men who have had five or more years' experience in the Fleet) .. ..	nil	26,227
Royal Naval Volunteers .. ..	nil	4,100
Total ..	27,600	51,861

## RESERVISTS NOT PERIODICALLY TRAINED.

Pensioners under 55 .. ..	39,180	7,969
---------------------------	--------	-------

There is a popular impression that the merchant navy is the reservoir upon which the Royal Navy should draw in time of war. This is an old fallacy, which we have inherited from the sail era. The truth is that we have every reason for satisfaction at the decrease in the number of men of the Royal Naval Reserve—merchant seamen and fishermen—since it has been accompanied by an even greater growth of the Royal Fleet Reserve of ex-naval men. The Navy does not require the merchant navy type of reservist. The conditions of naval service have completely changed and are still changing. The men who are needed for the arduous service of the Royal Navy to-day are those who—

- (1) are instantly available ;
- (2) are familiar with the routine of life on board a man-of-war ; and
- (3) have an aptitude for mechanical as distinguished from manual work.

Moreover, is it not an anomaly to maintain a supreme war fleet, at a great cost, in order, among other things, that the merchant fleet of England may go about its business in time of war, carrying to this country the much-needed supplies of food and raw material, and at the same time to make plans under which the merchant navy, robbed of its best hands in the interest of the war Navy, would be compelled to lie up in our harbours, idle and useless? The Royal Navy exists that the merchant navy may keep the seas in time of war and that we may obtain food. What justification,

then, is there for a naval policy—such as that of the immediate past—which definitely planned a war organisation for the Royal Navy based, in part at least, upon a scheme capable of being carried out only at the expense of the mercantile marine? Such a scheme of war efficiency rested upon no secure foundation. Apart from this, it necessarily follows that reservists who are engaged in making long distance voyages cannot be readily available in time of war. Even when the Admiralty, under the pressure of public opinion, devoted itself to the up-building of the old reserve system, it was recognised that at best only about one-third of the reservists enrolled in the merchant navy could be counted upon on the outbreak of war, and that that one-third would go afloat unacquainted with the routine of naval life owing to the fact that their sole war training had been carried out in their hours of leisure at ill-armed batteries ashore. The consequence of this plan of manning the Fleet was that the Admiralty had to pay three reservists for every one whom they could expect to secure in an emergency, and this one-third could be secured only by crippling that very merchant service which it is the business of the Royal Navy to preserve.

It may be objected that these are very revolutionary views. They are to be found, however, with some approach to completeness, in one of those many Blue Books which lie buried under the dust of every Government office. In January, 1902, a former Board of Admiralty appointed a Committee to consider this very question of the manning of the

Navy, with Sir Edward Grey as chairman. Associated with him in the investigation were Admiral of the Fleet Sir Edward Seymour, Admiral Sir Reginald Henderson (formerly Admiral Superintendent of Coastguards and Reserves), Admiral the Hon. Sir Hedworth Meux (now Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth), Sir Francis Howell, Sir Alfred Jones, and Mr. J. Clark Hall (Registrar General of Seamen). As a result of a most painstaking inquiry the Committee reported, among other things :

One of the objects of a strong Navy is to enable our merchant ships to keep the sea in time of war, and this object would be defeated if too many seamen and firemen were suddenly withdrawn from the mercantile marine and a considerable portion of it laid up in consequence of want of crews. . . .

The Committee note that if for political or other reasons it should be found necessary to increase gradually, without mobilisation, the proportion of ships in commission to those in reserve, the present manning system would break down because all the active service ratings would be used up first and there would only be half-trained reserves left for the ships commissioned.

The old manning system was so faulty that the commissioning of a few extra ships would have occasioned complete dislocation. War vessels would have put to sea manned almost exclusively by reservists, trained mainly at shore batteries, many of which had nothing more modern than muzzle-loading guns.

In these circumstances the Admiralty a few years ago introduced a new scheme of training for the reservists of the merchant navy. With few exceptions they have now to go afloat in order to qualify for the receipt of their allowances, and the old absurd system of instructing naval seamen at batteries ashore has been abolished. It would have been almost as absurd to take cavalry men afloat in his Majesty's ships for their summer manœuvres as to train naval reservists for the Fleet at shore batteries armed with muzzle-loading guns. The system was rotten to the core, and there is every occasion for satisfaction at the reforms which have been introduced and which have caused many men to leave this branch of the Navy. The Royal Navy and the merchant navy have become in process of independent development, distinct organisations, and it is mere waste of money and energy to endeavour to retain the old and close connection between the two except so far as the Navy, by means of a short service system, limited in application, can assist in supplying the merchant navy with a proportion of trained, disciplined men after they have served five years under the White Ensign.

A revolution, then, has been effected in the manning the Navy. Ten years ago it was intended in time of war to scour the land and sea in order to obtain sufficient men of the mercantile marine to supply one-third of the complements of the ships in the home waters and thus raise them to war strength. No ship was fully manned with active service ratings. The Navy—the whole of the Navy



in home waters—could be placed on a war footing only when widely distributed and far distant reservists had, at least in part, been called in. How long this process would have taken it is impossible to say, because it was never tested and could never have been tested adequately except on the eve of actual war.

Under the scheme of naval organisation which has now proved its efficiency, the first fighting line of the Navy is manned by the Navy's own officers and men. Summer after summer, without requisitioning the services of the Royal Naval Reserve, the Royal Fleet Reserve, or the pensioners, the Admiralty are able to commission and send to sea for the manœuvres every effective ship of the Navy's first line. The Admiralty have under their hands sufficient officers and men of the regular force to send the first fighting line of the Navy to sea without any such delay as would necessarily occur if reliance were placed upon naval reservists as distinct from the men of the Fleet Reserve. Every fully effective vessel of the fleet is always in commission, kept ready for any eventuality.

The scheme of mobilisation has been shown by the experience of manœuvres to be a triumph of organisation which has no parallel in any other navy in the world. Public opinion can render valuable service by preventing any effort to weaken this organisation for the purpose of short-sighted economies.

There are indications that in the coming discussions on the Navy an effort will be made to prevail upon the Government to cut down the numbers



## 130 THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

voted for the Fleet. The demand is supported by specious but entirely fallacious arguments which are based upon a comparative statement of the regular forces of the great navies of the world. The figures upon which an attack is usually based are as follows, showing that Great Britain has more officers and men than any two Powers :

COUNTRY	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908
Great Britain -	131,000	129,000	127,000	127,000	128,000
Germany -	38,128	40,843	43,654	46,936	50,531
United States -	45,398	50,049	50,295	51,942	54,867
France -	52,559	54,549	57,108	57,461	57,035
Italy -	26,994	27,492	28,000	28,476	29,571
Austria-Hungary	10,409	11,989	13,099	13,133	14,053
Increase (+), of 1912 over 1904					
COUNTRY	1909	1910	1911	1912*	over 1904
Great Britain -	128,000	131,000	134,000	136,000	+5,000
Germany -	53,946	57,373	60,805	65,000	+26,892
United States -	58,827	61,890	62,285	63,000	+17,602
France -	57,351	58,595	58,649	60,000	+7,441
Italy -	30,613	30,613	30,587	32,000	+5,006
Austria-Hungary	14,954	16,148	17,277	18,000	+7,531

It will be seen that England is the country which in the past nine years has increased the number of her regular personnel least. Every other country has made great additions, and these, in the case of Germany, have amounted to nearly 27,000. The case of those who urge a further reduction in the numbers voted for the Fleet rests upon the fact that while Germany and France combined have at present only just over 125,000 officers and men, Great Britain still maintains about 136,000. It is repeatedly urged that this is considerably more than the Two Power Standard, and time and again the Government

\* These are estimates.

have been pressed to effect an economy by wholesale reductions.

The position of Great Britain as a naval power is, however, so peculiar that its requirements cannot be settled by such casual methods. In the first place, the German and French flags are represented abroad on a much smaller scale. The German Fleet and the French Fleet are concentrated almost entirely in home waters ; the British Navy is on duty in all parts of the world. While Germany has in the Mediterranean one yacht, Great Britain, in order to maintain her prestige and to keep open this essential artery of trade and empire, has hitherto maintained there a considerable fleet manned by about 8,000 officers and men. In time of war in the English Channel or the North Sea this body of officers and men would be a full week's steaming from home waters. There are roughly another 12,000 men on duty in the East Indies, in China, in Australian waters, at the Cape, in the West Indies, and on the coasts of the American continents, while others are widely distributed in surveying ships, for we are still the chart-makers of the world. We thus reach a total of at least 20,000 men who would be unavailable in time of sudden war in home waters. They form an essential part of the naval machine, but they have no corresponding numbers in foreign fleets, which are mainly concentrated in home waters. In round figures, Germany has on foreign service somewhat less than 3,000 men ; and France and America about 4,000 each ; while the numbers in the case of Italy, Russia, Austria-

Hungary and other smaller navies are, of course, very much less. In order to arrive, therefore, at a comparison between the resources of Great Britain and the next two greatest European Powers—Germany and France—it is necessary to make deductions as indicated, unless those who urge the cutting down of the British personnel are willing also to approve the complete withdrawal of the British flag from the Mediterranean, the Far East, the Pacific, and the Atlantic. Unless they are in favour of this policy, the comparison between British and French and German resources must be made after deducting in each case those officers and men who are withdrawn by duty from home waters. Thus the available resources of Great Britain in the event of sudden war, are about 116,000 as compared with 62,000 in the case of Germany and nearly 56,000 in the case of France, or a total of 118,000 for France and Germany combined.

These considerations, however, do not exhaust the statement of facts which must underlie Admiralty policy in providing for the manning of the Fleet. Year by year the personnel of foreign navies is still being rapidly increased. Six years hence the German Navy will require about 15,000 more officers and men, and these are to be provided under the naval law, in due course raising the personnel to 80,000. In the case of France and the United States the growth of the personnel will be less rapid, but considerable. If we are to maintain an adequate fleet we should have at least twice as many officers and men as Germany, in order to meet the demands

of the empire and provide the essential protection for the mercantile marine in all the world's seas. In considering the Estimates from year to year it is necessary therefore to keep in view not the actual requirements of the Navy as it exists to-day, but its needs in the future when the fleets of Germany, France, Russia and the United States will already have made very great progress.

A second line of argument which is advanced by those who counsel a reduction of the British personnel is that Great Britain should place increased reliance upon naval reserves in order to raise the Navy from a peace to a war footing. This is a specious contention which unfortunately meets with a certain measure of support from public speakers and writers. It is forgotten that the British naval reserves—necessarily poorly trained for war service—can be called out only by means of a Royal proclamation, which is diametrically opposed to secrecy in war organisation, apart from the disadvantage that the naval authorities cannot count upon obtaining more than one-third or so of the naval reservists enrolled in a period of a week. During that week, which certainly would be of critical importance as affecting the issues of war, ships would lie unmanned or only partly manned in the dockyards which ought to be at sea. In naval warfare it is the first few days which count. In Germany and in France, where reliance under a conscriptive system—a source of weakness—must be placed to some extent upon reservists, these men can be called to the colours by the mere administrative act of the Navy Departments, without the delay

and publicity of a Royal proclamation. Herein lies a radical distinction vitiating any scheme of British mobilisation which depends for its efficiency upon the naval reservists. The virtue of the existing scheme of naval organisation is that it is so nicely adjusted, as was illustrated last summer, as to enable all the most modern and efficient ships to be organised and sent to sea manned with well-trained crews at a few hours' notice, leaving the Fleet Reserve men to complete the crews of the older vessels.

The maintenance of the existing organisation and its future development on sound lines must depend on an adequate number of officers and men being provided. It does not, however, follow that for every new vessel laid down sufficient officers and men must be entered to man it. Old ships will automatically pass from the fully commissioned state to that of a "war nucleus," yet older ships from the war nucleus to the reduced nucleus, with only a relatively small number of men on board each as a maintenance party, and the oldest ships will be sold out of the service. We have an asset of incalculable value in the long-service men of the Fleet. We cannot count on better built ships, on better equipment, but we can man them with better officers and men than any other nation can obtain. "The men are splendid," was the report from South Africa during the war. In a naval war victory will depend mainly not on the type of our ships, but on the type of our men. Let it be our task to see that there are enough of them—be the cost what it may, for when the day comes they will be cheap at any price.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE POLICY OF HOME DEFENCE :—INVASION OR STARVATION.

It is an axiom held by the British Government that the Empire's existence depends primarily upon the maintenance of adequate and efficient naval forces. As long as this condition is fulfilled, and as long as British superiority at sea is assured, then it is an accepted principle that no British dominion can be successfully and permanently conquered by an organised invasion from oversea. . . .

For this reason it has recently been agreed that the home forces of the United Kingdom should be so organised as to compel an enemy contemplating an invasion to make the attempt on such a scale as to be unable to evade our naval forces.—*Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener in his Memorandum on Australian Defence.*

THE British people have a genius of their own. It has produced a system of government, a scheme of defence, a plan of colonisation, a standard of home life, even a sumptuary *régime*—voluntary and yet effective—which are essentially British and radically distinct from the modes and manners on the European Continent. On this foundation the British Empire has been raised. Our forefathers were proud of their singularity; they were proud of their island state, of their freedom



to shape their own history in their own way, and, above all, proud of their dependence on the sea—the mother of an Empire which, in extent, in population, in loyalty to a single throne, in devotion to a practical habit of life and thought, and in fealty to a common code of government, has had no parallel in the world's history. In the past we have gloried in our sea traditions. We have realised that “out of the infinite horizon there grows in the mind and character of a seafaring people a strong tendency towards boldness, fortitude, and long-sightedness.” We have boasted—and not without warrant—that “seafaring nations have materially contributed to the enlargement and heightening of political standards,” and that “to them narrow territorial politics appear but short-sighted policy.” When the Continent ran with the blood of conscript armies we alone held to the faith that “the wide open sea serves to enlarge the views of both merchants and statesmen,” and that “the sea alone can produce truly great Powers.”

At a moment when this—our own—philosophy is being preached from end to end of the German Empire, when the eyes of the German people are being directed overseas, there is a new school of thought in England intent on a less generous scheme of life. It preaches a policy of military service ashore, based not on the higher patriotism which has been our pride in the past, but on compulsion, a policy of hedgerow defence instead of the offensive-defensive of a supreme Fleet. It insists that the peril of invasion does exist and that we have no



certain hope of preserving our freedom save by preparing to fight the invader after he has landed.

If one may judge by the babel of voices, the pamphlets which are being distributed, and the meetings which are being held in all parts of the country, the movement in favour of compulsory service is growing apace. An effort is being made to turn this country into a "sort of Germany" before Germany reduced the length of conscript service in the Army and embraced the naval faith. The advocates of compulsory service, moved on the one hand by entirely unfounded fears of invasion, and, on the other, by the hope of arresting the physical degeneration of their fellow-countrymen, are making a determined assault—perhaps the most determined in modern times—upon the liberty and freedom of the subject. He has hitherto been free to render what naval, military, social, or political service he cares to render. The majority of the people of Great Britain, it is true, give no service to the State. The exponents of military training may be—possibly are—right in their assumption that every man would be a better citizen if he learnt the rudiments of military drill and all it connotes in submission to authority, in mutual knowledge, and in interdependence of one individual on another—the highest class upon the lowest, and *vice versa*.

There is reason to believe that some form of military service in the United Kingdom—or is it only England?—might prove of advantage to the youth of this country, but there is no proof such as the advocates of this change represent. Ger-

many is not the only country on the Continent with compulsory service. France also possesses a conscript army, so does Russia, so does Greece, so does Spain. Compulsory military training did not save to Spain her colonial empire ; compulsory military training did not save Russia from humiliation at the hands of the Japanese ; compulsory military training has not instilled into the French, Spanish, or other peoples those solid qualities which are claimed for the Germans.

### I. THE CASE AGAINST COMPULSORY TRAINING.

It is necessary to probe considerably deeper into the German organisation than the army system if one would find the true cause of Germany's intellectual and commercial progress and that apparent solidarity of national aim which compels the admiration of the superficial student of German affairs. It may be that military service has assisted in the development of national character, but education, directed by a wise bureaucracy, has done much more. The perseverance and concentration of aim attributed to the German people there is only too much reason to believe is more apparent than real. The face of Germany which appears in the evolution of German policy as viewed by the outside world, and which strikes the casual visitor, is not the real expression of national will, but a bureaucratic mask which is spread over the natural features. Hitherto the real public opinion of Germany has found only sporadic expression, owing to the success with which the " machine " has

succeeded in keeping democracy under and denying to it that influence in national affairs which the peoples of England, France, and some more modern countries have secured. The electoral machinery of Germany has been carefully manipulated, and the result is that the world hears little or nothing of the real Germany, except, periodically, when the million-fisted knock ineffectively against the doors of the bureaucracy.

At present the voice of Germany is the voice not of the people of Germany, increasively Socialistic, but of those who still retain in their hands the reins of government, practically uncontrolled by the forces which in other and more advanced countries tend towards diffusion of effort. It may be that among many counsellors there is wisdom, but undoubtedly the German "machine" presents to the world an impressive exterior, and this national expression can be attributed only in very slight degree to the influence of national military training upon the national character. The virtue of military service must be assessed not merely by comparison with Germany, but by studying the influence which it has exercised on other nationalities—the French, the Russian, the Greek, the Spanish, the Portuguese, the Italian—and then the success of the United States, without compulsory service, must be explained. It may be that military training would be beneficial to the people of the United Kingdom, but the case has not been proved—and in any event military training tends to divert the mind of the nation, which lives on and by the sea, from the great

problem of defence on the sea to the narrower problem of defence on the land. We cannot afford to barter our whole habit of life for a chimera.

But even if universal military training were proved to be desirable, the question still remains—Is a compulsory system attainable in this democratic country? There is a certain type of person who is always bent upon compulsion in order to obtain the performance by others of acts which are thought to be so admirable and essential as to justify extreme measures. In years gone by, when the Church exercised an almost supreme power, it exerted its influence in order to compel men not only to attend public worship regularly, but to worship in strict accordance with the views of the clergy. The Church was even able to punish rigorously all who worshipped in any other way. The aim was to make England virtuous and religious by a penal code. Similarly there were attempts to make subjects loyal by compulsion. The pathway along which the British nation has moved is white with the bones of those who have fought to enslave the British people and with the bones of those others who have struggled and met death rather than submit to various forms of compulsion.

In these days, when the conscience of every man is as free as the air, the old spirit of freedom, sometimes possibly merely the old spirit of contrariness and opposition to authority, asserts itself on the slightest provocation. So long, for instance, as vaccination was compulsory there were thousands of persons who resisted the law, as they claimed, on behalf of

their children, and suffered fines and imprisonment. There is no doubt that during the anti-vaccination agitation the majority of the British people were strongly in favour of this precaution against the spread of smallpox, but nevertheless the old compulsory powers exercised by the State were doomed to be repealed because little bands of "martyrs" throughout the country defied the law. At the instance of Lord Salisbury's Government a new Vaccination Act was passed which recognised "the conscientious objector," and empowered magistrates to issue certificates of exemption. There are some forms of religious and social faith which live by persecution.

An even more significant illustration of the power of the conscientious objector is supplied by the story of the education controversy. Mr. Balfour's Act was immediately admitted by all parties as a great step forward in the direction of improved facilities for educating young England. But the Act also contained provisions to which a section of militant Nonconformists took the strongest objection, provisions placing Church schools upon the rates, and at the same time providing rate-aid for the support of denominational training colleges for teachers. In the subsequent agitation the virtues of the measure were entirely lost sight of. It soon became apparent that a small section of the ratepayers would passively resist the Act at all costs. At first the movement was treated in many quarters with something approaching contempt. "What," it was asked, "could these com-

paratively few conscientious objectors—barely 1 per cent. of the whole population of England—hope to achieve in face of the apparent acquiescence in the law of the vast majority of the ratepayers?" Subsequent events supplied a convincing answer to such an argument, and showed, as in the case of the old Vaccination Act, what can be done by a small body of earnest persons animated, as they believe, by the highest motives.

The movement against the Education Act spread rapidly, but at no time was the number of protestants large. Throughout the country, however, these passive resisters held out in their struggle against the law. They submitted to fines, imprisonment, and to the seizure of their goods and forced sale by the local authority in order to obtain the rate money. Up to November, 1904, summonses were issued against 35,520 persons, the goods of 1,395 defaulters were publicly sold, and sixty-one persons manœuvred so as to compel the State to send them to prison. The attitude of this little army of passive resisters was not without its influence upon many persons who refused to join in the movement. Month by month as the prosecution or persecution of these "martyrs" proceeded, increased sympathy was aroused, and the strenuous fight against the law welded into a victorious army all who were not in sympathy with the Unionist Party, which had been responsible for this Act. From the date when the passive resistance movement was initiated, the authority of Mr. Balfour's administration began to wane, and at last, when the inevitable appeal to the electorate took



place, Nonconformists—Unionist as well as Radical Nonconformists—who considered that their consciences had been outraged, contributed in large measure to the dramatic landslide which eliminated the Unionist majority of 74 and placed the Liberals in office with a record majority of 354.

Such instances as these are not without their lesson to those who would attempt to impose upon the country a compulsory system of military service which the nation has been assured, on the highest authority, is not necessary for safety. It matters not what the term of service might be, nor the rates of pay ; the mere fact of compulsion would raise up against such a measure a band of " martyrs " exceeding by ten-fold—if not a thousand-fold—those who were willing to suffer the worst penalties of the civil law rather than submit in the one case to vaccination and in the other to what was regarded as State-aided denominational education. Violent opposition to any form of military drill would be created, and not improbably the present Territorial Army would disappear, and the whole voluntary movement for defence be set back indefinitely.

It is evident from the pamphlets issued in support of compulsory service that there is a complete lack of appreciation on the part of this school of thought not only of the British defence problem but of the history of the volunteer movement. The truth is that the very classes which are responsible for the agitation for compulsion are mainly deficient in the performance of the subsidiary home defence duties which were formerly regarded as one of the



main ends of existence of a British citizen. The cry for compulsion is not a sign of the awakening of national spirit, but rather an indication of decadence. The volunteer movement of 1859, on the other hand, was a national uprising. It was essentially a volunteer effort towards defence, and in its early days recruits were drawn largely from the moneyed, professional, and tradesmen classes. The Fleet was notoriously weak, and it was thought that the country was menaced by the increasing power of France and the designs which Napoleon III. was supposed to entertain. The British Government of the day at first embodied the Militia regiments as a protective measure. In comparison with the armed forces on the other side of the English Channel, separated from English shores by only "the silver streak," this display of power was glaringly insignificant.\* The people of England, realising the weakness of the Navy, and without reference to constitutional authority, began to take up arms. From the conclusion of the peace in the early years of the nineteenth century down to the time of this outburst of enmity on the part of France, England had had no volunteers—only a Regular Army of small dimensions. In face of an apparent menace, volunteers sprang to arms. The Government stood aloof; but still the beacon-fire of patriotism spread from county to county, until at last, in view of the increasing state of unrest in Europe, General Peel, then Minister for War, issued a circular to the Lords-Lieutenant of the Counties granting permission for the formation of

\* The British Navy was barely equal to that of France alone.

properly organised volunteer corps for home defence.

The Government gave permission for the enrolment of volunteers, but withheld all financial aid. No promise of assistance was forthcoming to meet the necessary expense of raising these corps, much less was any mention made of pay or reward. The patriotic spirit of the people was at such a height that it was not considered necessary to offer any inducement to volunteers, and such as came forward were willing to equip themselves with uniform, accoutrements, and arms, and supply themselves with military instructors without State subvention. The volunteer movement came into being not only on a volunteer basis of service, but on a volunteer basis of support. Even when the alarm which first awakened this martial spirit was proved by events to be without foundation, and the tense feeling throughout Europe was relieved, recruits continued to enlist in their thousands. At this date the patriotic spirit of the English people was probably at its height.

Within a few years a significant change occurred. Lord Kingsburgh, the successful leader of the Scotch Volunteers, in an interesting *résumé* of the movement, records that at length the question arose : Is this force worth the expense to the country of providing the necessary armament, clothing, and equipment ? " The question was made the more urgent," Lord Kingsburgh remarks, " by its becoming apparent that the moneyed and well-to-do classes, who at first had formed the great bulk of the volunteer

force, were not so patriotic in time of peace as to continue to enrol themselves, and sacrifice comfort and time in drilling and practising at the target for the country's defence."

It is unpleasant to be compelled to record that year after year the numbers of the leisured, the professional, and the middle class volunteers diminished, that it became impossible to keep up companies recruited from these ranks, that many of them ceased to exist as such and were replaced by companies of artisans, and that many which maintained their existence did so only by taking into their ranks their employees in the lower grades of their profession. Merchant companies enrolled their shopmen, solicitors' companies enrolled their clerks, barristers' companies dissolved, and gradually the whole character of the force was changed. It became, as regards the rank and file, a working-men's force. The great mass of those now enrolled are men dependent upon weekly wages or small salaries for their subsistence, to whom the expense of providing uniform and accoutrements would be altogether prohibitive.

Further, those who in the early days of the movement had contributed liberally to the funds of the corps in their district, ceased to do so. The novelty of the movement was gone, and those whose enthusiasm was not strong enough to induce them to serve ceased to yield to appeals to their purses.\*

Thus the volunteers came to be paid. From the control of the Lords-Lieutenant the corps passed in some degree under State control. In those new conditions, the volunteer movement still continued to retain its hold upon the English people, but its

\* Chambers's *Encyclopædia*.

character had changed. The better-to-do classes, young professional men in particular, refrained from rendering this service to the State either as officers or in the ranks. The spirit of patriotism which in 1859 led young men of high birth or wealth to serve more or less willingly shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-countrymen of a lower social order now finds little response among young men in the United Kingdom. Except in certain class corps, the rank and file of the volunteers are to-day drawn almost exclusively from the artisan and labouring classes. Year by year the burden of voluntary service has been borne mainly by the working men of Great Britain, and in steadily decreasing ratio by the middle classes, by those with more means and leisure, who are far more exuberant in their professions of patriotism under the exciting influence of public meetings or in the artificial atmosphere of a music-hall. It is this falling away, this decline of a patriotic spirit making little of social distinctions, which has paved the way for the present movement in favour of compulsory service, supported by members of the class which, when weighed in the balance, has been found wanting.

In spite of this abstention of the upper and middle classes, has voluntary service proved in experience a failure? What are the facts? Though these classes have fallen away from the standard of sixty years ago, the working classes have never rendered the State such efficient service as to-day, and the military forces of the Empire were never organised on such a commanding scale—organised, moreover,

# 148 THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

so far as home defence is concerned, for a strictly limited duty—to deal with a raiding force not exceeding 70,000 men. The progress which has been made in these sixty years is revealed in the following comparative statement :

HOME (INCLUDING CHANNEL ISLANDS).			
1859 (ALL RANKS).		1910 (ALL RANKS).	
Regulars	- - 66,921	Regulars	- - 128,122
Other Troops :—		Other Troops :—	
Enrolled Pensioners	14,770	Army Reserve	- 133,990
Embodied Militia	20,479	Special	- - 70,486
Disembodied Militia	80,221	Territorial Force	274,211
Volunteers	- - 14,981	Militia	- - 4,527
		Reserve Dn. Militia	845
		Channel Is. Militia	3,010
Total other Troops	130,451	Total other Troops	487,069
TOTAL AT HOME	197,372	TOTAL AT HOME	615,191
ABROAD.			
Regulars	- - 151,526	Regulars	- - 123,764*
Other Troops :—		Other Troops : -	
Enrolled Pensioners	226	Militia—Malta and	
		Bermuda	- 2,376
Total Abroad	151,752	Volunteers—Ber-	
		muda	- - 208
		Total Abroad	126,348
TOTAL AT HOME AND		TOTAL AT HOME AND	
ABROAD	- - 349,124	ABROAD	- 741,539†

These figures reveal the progress which has been made in sixty years. We have a Fleet stronger relatively and actually than ever before in modern

\* Includes 4,387 Indian Native Troops serving in the Colonies.

† Including the Native Indian Army and the local Colonial forces, the aggregate military resources of the Empire are now approximately 1,300,000, no mean total for an Empire whose main defence is its fleets.

times, and in face of a possible raid of less than 70,000 invaders—the official limit fixed by Lord Roberts when Commander-in-Chief—we have in the United Kingdom over 600,000 officers and men, apart from the resources in the outposts of the Empire. The contrast between the forces available for home defence and the extent of the peril is sufficiently effective, and needs no comment.

Even more remarkable than the numbers available are the character of the forces and the spirit which animates the country. We have the only long service Army in existence, as the following statement of service with the colours indicates :

United Kingdom .	6 to 8 years in the Cavalry and Artillery, 7 years in the Infantry.
Austria-Hungary .	3 years in the Cavalry and the Horse Artillery, 2 years in all other arms.
France . . .	2 years for all arms. In the colonial army, 3, 4 or 5 years, according to age on enlistment.
Germany . . .	3 years in the Cavalry and the Horse Artillery, 2 years in the other arms.
Russia . . .	3 years in the Infantry, Field and Mountain Artillery, 4 years in all other arms.

If there is any reason for ignoring the Territorial Army because it has not the two-year standard of Germany's short-service infantry, then what a pinnacle of efficiency the long-service Army of the United Kingdom should occupy in contrast with the conscript armies of the Continent !



Evidence as to the spirit which now animates the country—or rather the working classes—is not far to seek. Official figures prove that Great Britain—particularly the artisan and working classes—is not dead to patriotism. If they are studied in association with the remarkable growth of cadet corps at the public schools, the officers' corps at the universities, and the curious story of the rise of the boys' brigades and scout corps, the outlook from the standpoint of those who place great virtue in military training becomes increasingly bright. What are our resources? In a pamphlet entitled "Our Birthright," published in 1906, the following table appeared of the number of trained men outside the Regular Army and its Regular reserve :

A	{	Old Regular Soldiers 45 to 65 years of age	.	.	125,000	
		" Militia " " " " "	"	"	225,000	
		" Yeomanry " " " " "	"	"		
		" Volunteer " " " " "	"	"	360,000	
Total					<u>705,000</u>	
B	{	Retired Regular Soldiers 30 to 45 years of age	.	444,000		
		" Militia " " " " "	"	675,000		
		" Yeomanry " " " " "	"	810,000		
		" Volunteer " " " " "	"	<u>1,929,000</u>		
Total					<u>1,929,000</u>	
C	{	Militia, Present Strength	.	.	.	100,000
		Yeomanry " " " " " "	.	.	.	25,000
		Volunteers " " " " " "	.	.	.	<u>260,000</u>
Total					<u>385,000</u>	
Grand Total					<u>3,019,000</u>	

A. Category may be considered quite equal to the German Landsturm. B. Category may be considered as quite equal to the German Landwehr. C. Category may be considered as quite equal to the German Ersatz Reserve.



There is every indication of an awakening of the old martial spirit of the nation, and only one thing can arrest its further growth—compulsion and the inevitable passive resistance which would at once occur. The whole movement in favour of military drill on national and personal grounds would be thrown into the arena of political and religious strife, and it would be killed. We have advanced too far in the recognition of democracy to turn back at this stage and imitate methods of defence unnecessary in view of our island position, and entirely antagonistic to our trend of thought. Under voluntary conditions the leaven is spreading.

We have methods and we have a genius of our own, and history proves that in the past—far less glorious than the present in its potentialities—we were able to hold our own against the world in arms. If some of the enthusiasm and energy which is now being directed to the hopeless propaganda in favour of a diluted form of conscription were devoted to strengthening the Territorial Army, providing physical culture for the youth of the working and lower-middle classes, and convincing the nation of its absolute dependence on the supremacy of the seas, it would be possible to look forward with increased confidence.

## II. THE CASE AGAINST INVASION.

But it may be urged “ You do not disprove the necessity of a larger army in order to defend this country against the peril of invasion by arguing against compulsory service. If we are in danger of a foreign army landing, then we must find some

adequate means of defence on our shores." But is invasion a real peril? This is the question which must be first answered in the affirmative before it is necessary to consider the means of defence against it.

In no country in the world is more heard of the invasion peril than in England. In France, Germany, Russia, Austria, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with their long, exposed frontiers and their unequal powers of defence, the possibility of invasion is seldom discussed. On the Continent the tendency is towards the reduction of the period of military service, while in England a powerful propaganda is being preached in favour of the creation of a great compulsory national army. At the very moment when the Continental Powers are devoting vastly increased sums to the maintenance of their fleets, and from numerous platforms we have been told that our naval supremacy is in danger because we cannot afford an adequate Navy, the country is being urged to develop further its land defences. The British people, who of all European peoples alone have the sea as a bulwark against aggression, are being terrorised by tens of thousands of pamphlets, by declamatory statements at hundreds of meetings up and down the country, into an abandonment of their privileges. Those who do not join in the movement are condemned as either careless, ignorant or unpatriotic. A vague pessimism, a depreciation of British institutions, and a glorification of foreign methods are held to be the shibboleths of true patriotism, and, above all, it is unpatriotic to continue to hold the historic, well-tried naval faith.

The "invasion school" insist that we must presume that the British Navy will be insufficient—or inefficient—and will fail to prevent the invaders reaching our shores in force. The first axiom which is advanced by the soldier—or some soldiers—is, therefore, that the sailor cannot perform the essential duty which he has performed for centuries even at times when England had her back to the wall and was facing the whole of Europe in arms, even at times when Napoleon strode Europe as a military Colossus. Where Napoleon failed because of the British Fleet's success, some modern military commander, we are told, will succeed because of the British Fleet's failure. Therefore we must have a "nation in arms" to fight him when he lands.

This is the policy of the last trench. It is the policy of the householder who, expecting burglars, takes refuge in the garret and prepares for its defence instead of keeping out the burglars by precautionary measures or telephoning to the police. On the same principle every house would have its armoured garret with its supply of rifles. We believe in the police-force-in-being as a prevention of war on life and property, but we are asked to abandon our belief in a Fleet-in-being as a prevention of war on British shores and British interests. When we glance from our windows we do not always see the man in blue nor hear his footfall at night, and yet we are undismayed. But because there are times when a man-of-war is not to be seen at this or that point of the coast, we are asked to believe that the country is in grave peril, that an enemy may land

in force at any moment and at any point on the beach without meeting with resistance, and that the remedy for this danger is not more ships but more soldiers—that tens of thousands of men should be compulsorily withdrawn from industry in order to fight in the last trench.

What is the real basis and justification of the craven fears which threaten to burden this country with a sort of conscript army, which threaten to turn this country into a sort of Germany, with its millions of soldiers, and which threaten to lose us even a sort of command of the sea, for we cannot serve two masters? Eight years ago, when the “invasion school” began their work, Lord Roberts was Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, and Mr. Balfour has told us that he was asked by the Government, “given that Great Britain was reduced to the position occupied during the Boer War—that is, without an army and with practically no naval force in British waters—what is the smallest number of men with which, as a forlorn hope, some foreign country could endeavour to invade our shores?” The reply given by Lord Roberts was, 70,000 men. On this hypothesis Mr. Balfour submitted the invasion problem to the consideration of the Committee of Imperial Defence. That body represents the highest trained judgment of the country on this particular problem. It is presided over by the Prime Minister for the time being, and its members include six other Cabinet Ministers; the First Sea Lord and the Director of Naval Intelligence representing the Navy, with the Chief of the General Staff

and the Director of Military Operations representing the Army. The Committee heard a mass of naval and military evidence, and came to a unanimous conclusion. In Mr. Balfour's words :

We have endeavoured to picture to ourselves a clear issue which is very unfavourable to this country, and have shown at least to our satisfaction that on that hypothesis, unfavourable as it is, serious invasion of these islands is not an eventuality which we need seriously consider.

The " invasion school " then had a short rest, but it was not silenced. In the words of Mr. Micawber, it " took a step back in order to take a decisive step forward." In 1907 it was again active, and claimed that all the conditions had changed since the inquiry was held. In November of that year the Committee of Imperial Defence—practically a new Committee in its constitution—again sat (for eleven months), and again it heard the best evidence on both sides. In the House of Commons, on July 29th, 1909, the Prime Minister told the country what the verdict was, after hearing the views of Lord Roberts and other military authorities who had associated themselves with him, and a great deal of independent evidence from other officers and from naval and military experts. The Committee studied with great care all the changes in the strategical situation since 1904, when the previous report was made, and the potentialities of invasion, going minutely into such matters as the time which would be needed for the mobilisation of a foreign army, the facilities for transport both by land and sea, the

organisation and distribution of forces, both naval and military, and the possibilities as regards embarkation, transport, and disembarkation incidental to an invasion on a large scale. The conclusions of the Committee, as Mr. Asquith stated, were arrived at after conceding to those who are apprehensive of the possibilities of invasion the most favourable hypothesis for their purpose—conceding, for instance, that the contemplated invasion would take place at a time when the Regular forces of this country were practically absent from our shores on some foreign expedition, and conceding further that the attack might be in the nature of a surprise attack—a sort of “bolt from the blue” at a time when normal diplomatic relations existed between ourselves and the country which attacked us.

In these circumstances the Prime Minister, speaking in Committee of Supply in the House of Commons, stated :

The conclusion at which we unanimously arrived—all the naval as well as all the military members of the Committee being at one on this point—may be summed up under two heads :

(a) *In the first place we decided that so long as the naval supremacy of this country is adequately assured, invasion on a large scale, by which I mean invasion on such a scale as was contemplated by Lord Roberts (in 1907), involving the transport of 120,000 or 150,000 men, is an absolutely impracticable operation.* On the other hand, if we permanently lost the command of the sea, whatever might be the strength and organisation of our military force at home—even if we had an Army as strong as that of Germany herself—it would be impossible for



this country to prevent invasion, and its subjection to the enemy would be inevitable. It follows from that proposition that it is the business of the Admiralty to maintain our naval supremacy at such a point that we cannot lose the command of the sea. Against any reasonable and possible combination which may be brought against us, if we can hold the sea, we make invasion impracticable.

(b) I come to the second phase : there are disciples of what is called the blue-water school, who think you can so rely on your Navy that you do not require to keep up a home Army at all. That school did not find much support from the evidence which was laid before us, and our second proposition is this, that *we ought to have an Army for home defence sufficient in numbers and organisation for two purposes*—in the first place to repel what are called raids, that is to say sporadic offensive expeditions which are small in numbers and are not intended permanently to occupy the country, but only to inflict as much damage as they can ; and in the second place, adequate to compel an enemy which contemplates invasion to come with so substantial a force as to make it impossible for him to evade our Fleets.

It has often been said—I do not know how the figure first came to be mentioned—that no one would attempt an invasion of this country with less than 70,000 men.\* Our Admiralty believe that a force of very much less than 70,000 could not possibly evade our Fleets. No one, I think, would undertake the task of invasion with a force of less than 70,000 men. I do not think 70,000 men will ever get to England at all, but we must have an ample margin of safety. Our conclusion was that in order to ensure that margin the force for home defence,

\* This was a statement made eight years ago by Lord Roberts.



permanently maintained here, should be sufficient to cope with a foreign invasion of 70,000 men.

After the Prime Minister's statement, Mr. Balfour rose to speak, as Leader of the Unionist Party. "I suppose," he remarked, "the Committee will expect me to say a few words after what has fallen from the Prime Minister, but the agreement between him and me on this subject is so complete that those words need be but few." He then expressed his concurrence with the conclusions of the Committee.

In spite of the teaching of history of over one thousand years, in spite of the views of the country's experts and statesmen—irrespective of party—the nation is still asked to believe that the immediate peril of the country is invasion. The peril has been studied with care by two successive groups of Ministers, and by the country's leading naval and military officers—the officers mainly responsible for our defences. The experts who were members of the Committee of Imperial Defence during the two inquiries and who agreed in the findings against invasion were as follows :

#### FIRST INQUIRY.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Walter Kerr, First Sea Lord.

Vice-Admiral Prince Louis of Battenberg, Director of Naval Intelligence.

Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

Field-Marshal Sir William Nicholson, Director General of Mobilisation and Military Intelligence.

Secretary : Sir George Sydenham Clarke, late R.E.

## SECOND INQUIRY.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher of Kilverstone,  
First Sea Lord.

Rear-Admiral Sir E. J. Slade, Director of Naval  
Intelligence.

Field-Marshal Sir William Nicholson, Chief of Staff of  
the Army.

Major-General J. S. Ewart, Director of Military  
Operations.

General Sir John French, Inspector-General of the  
Forces.

Secretary: Rear-Admiral Sir Charles Ottley.

When this or that unattached officer's opinion on  
the peril of invasion is quoted, it should be remem-  
bered that these two sets of experts—responsible for  
the policy of defence and with all the facts at their  
command—have decided that the peril does not exist.

As to the opinion of the responsible military  
experts there has been no concealment. Speaking  
on December 1st, 1911, at a Territorial gathering,  
Lord Haldane remarked:

One thing was certain, and that was that a compulsory  
and a voluntary system could not exist side by side.  
Those in favour of compulsion talked of a four months'  
or a six months' training. This was the programme of a  
great many civilians and a large number of ladies and  
retired officers. But if one asked the soldiers on the  
active list, the men whose daily business it was to deal  
with military problems, they said it was no use talking  
of less than two years' training begun at an age not  
lower than 19, if we were to have troops to meet on  
equal terms trained Continental soldiers. If that were  
true, the programme of the National Service League did

not suit either the compulsory or the voluntary system, and it must be remembered that there could not be the two systems side by side, as we had to raise an enormous army for service in India, South Africa, and other parts of the Empire.

The late War Secretary could hardly have been more explicit. His words can mean only one thing—that the distinguished officers of the General Staff of the Army are not in favour of the programme of the National Service League, and that they have definitely come to the conclusion that we must either develop our existing military forces on voluntary lines to the best of our ability, or adopt conscription on Continental lines. So far as well-informed military opinion is concerned, Lord Haldane's declaration, resting on the authority of Field-Marshal Sir William Nicholson and his colleagues, sounds the death-knell of such a radically unsound scheme as that advocated by the National Service League.

The case against invasion on a grand scale has been proved up to the hilt on the admission of every responsible naval and military expert. In face of such unanimity why should any body of men continue to support a theory which is demonstrably untrue? It is not patriotic, because the amount of money and effort which can be devoted to home defence is not illimitable; the more energy and money are devoted to the defence of the British Isles against a bogey, the less will be available for the main defence of an Empire which lives on and by the sea, and which, without the command of the sea, must inevitably be shattered into fragments as the

result of the first onslaughts of a determined enemy. If the country cannot accept the carefully considered views of the succession of distinguished naval and military officers who have been responsible for our defence policy at the Admiralty and the War Office during the past decade, by whose views is it to be guided? Is it not preposterous that an attempt should be made to deflect national policy from its proper channel—its channel under Conservative, Unionist, and Liberal Cabinets—by an agitation which events have shown to be ill-informed and contrary to the highest expert opinion?

It is the custom of the "invasion school" to refer with contempt to the smallness of the British Army, thereby attempting to mislead unthinking people. This is one of the "leading lines" in the propaganda of the National Service League. Its plea is supported by a few sophisticated naval statistics—so sophisticated as to be grotesque—and the following comparison of military strength, which is intended to make the flesh of the British people creep with nervous fear:

Country.	Annual Military Expenditure. £	Total number of Trained Men immediately available in peace time.	Total number of Trained Men available after 15 days of war.
Germany ... ..	32,000,000	620,000	3,750,000 (a)
France ... ..	32,000,000	605,000	3,000,000 (b)
United Kingdom	27,300,000	120,000	330,000 (c)
Belgium ... ..	2,500,000	50,000	180,000
Holland ... ..	2,200,000	41,000	125,000
Denmark ... ..	670,000	14,000	75,000

(a) 1,150,000 Active Army and 1st Reserves; 600,000 Landwehr; 2,000,000 Ersatz and Landsturm. Total, 3,750,000.

(b) 1,200,000 Active Army and 1st Reserves; 600,000 Depots; 1,200,000 Territorial Army. Total, 3,000,000.

(c) 120,000 Regular Troops normally in the U.K.; 129,000 Army Reserves; 81,000 Special Reserves. Total, 330,000.

The National Service League does not condescend to include in the military forces of the United Kingdom the Territorial Army. What a recognition of splendid patriotic service by a patriotic League! This omission is excused on the plea that, "unlike Continental reserves, it is not formed of men who have been trained in the ranks of the active Army." \* It is essential to the League's purpose to ignore this force, otherwise its contrast with European conscript armies would be less effective. Had mention been made of the Territorial Army, the British military forces would have been increased by 270,000 officers and men, raising the total strength, apart from the Indian and Colonial Armies, to 600,000 men. The propaganda of the National Service League would have been still further weakened if they had condescended to take notice of the opinion of the late General Langlois, who, after visiting several of the Territorial camps in 1910, formed a very high opinion of the Territorial Army. This officer, who was a member of the French Supreme Council of War, came to this country prejudiced against the Territorial Army, and he returned home loud in its praise. He remarked:

"My opinion has been profoundly modified. . . . The point which struck me most at the outset is that the Territorial divisions are thoroughly organised units. All the services in them have been created, and work regularly without any assistance from the Regular Army."

\* Nothing short of a British conscriptive Army would meet this objection to the Territorial Army.

Of the officers, he said: " Their tactical knowledge leaves something to be desired, but they work with ardour, and I am inclined to believe that even now the greater number would give a very good performance, even in difficult and delicate circumstances, owing to their energy, their resolute will, and, above all, the remarkable spirit of initiative which they have acquired in their ordinary occupations. They will make mistakes in tactics, but they will know how to repair them."

Of the men, he remarked that they are characterised by a " remarkable energy, a great tenacity, a goodwill above all praise. With such qualities, and in face of a national danger, any army should do great things. I remarked the care with which they adjusted their sights and took their aim. Where weakness is most likely to be experienced is in the control of fire."

His final judgment was that the Territorial Army is strong and good enough to defend the country against invasion, especially if it be reinforced with one regular division, and provided that Germany's attention is occupied in France. Therefore, it would be possible for England in a European war to place five regular divisions on the Continent.\*

All foreign observers have come to much the same opinion as this distinguished French officer. The Territorial Army in actual experience has exceeded all expectations. The artillery is weak, but this weakness, which is disappearing, can hardly be regarded as justification for entirely disregarding

\* *L'Opinion*—translated in the *Daily Mail*.



a body of 270,000 trained officers and men. It is a school of voluntary patriotic effort in combination which has no parallel in history. Lord Haldane has achieved a great triumph; the "invasion school" must suffer a correspondingly crushing defeat. The fact is that England is not less adequately defended, but more adequately defended, because her main armies, instead of being tied to the shore, have been translated into naval terms and are able to proceed at will to any part of the sea-united Empire. Great Britain has in her unrivalled fleets the equivalent of the armed camps of Europe. The armies of Europe are immutably tied to limited areas of land; the British Navy is the most mobile instrument of war which the world has ever seen, and, owing to the inheritance of a series of well-placed coaling stations, it is free, as no Continental army is free, to go anywhere and do anything, except climb mountains or remove our neighbours' landmarks.

But the favourite argument of fear which is advanced in favour of compulsory service is that the "Fleet may be decoyed away." No one has ever explained by whom, how, or why the Navy is to be decoyed away, nor what it would do when wireless messages, passing through space as quick as light, recalled it to its obvious duty to fight the enemy and the admiral to be tried by court-martial. It is not as though the British Navy had only one fleet or only one squadron. It has a fleet or squadron in every sea. There is no other European navy represented in anything approaching the British strength



in these distant seas. The normal defence of British interests in these foreign waters is already on the spot; organised and trained for war. In addition we have the Home Fleets, and these Home Fleets do not exist and are not so named in order that they may proceed on some wild-goose chase directly our relations with any neighbouring European Power become strained.

The effort of the "invasion school" to recommend compulsory service by this "decoy" argument is as though General Sir R. Baden-Powell tried to justify the girl and boy scout movement by the plea that when war comes the regular army may be in bed. There has surely never been a more absurd suggestion than that at the moment when it is needed in the area of war, the British Navy—including our Home Fleets of 350 ships of war—will be careering about somewhere else. One hundred years ago such an argument could have been advanced without incurring ridicule, because in those days men-of-war carried provisions for six months, and the winds of heaven supplied them with motive power. Now the conditions have changed. Modern fleets are tied to their bases because they must have coal, and there is no foreign Power which has such a chain of bases as would enable its ships to fly far afield in a decoying movement. A modern ship in these circumstances can steam only exactly half the distance of its full radius of action, because it must save half its coal for the return journey. Therefore, when it is suggested that the British Fleets—the only fleets with freedom of movement—are to be

decoyed away, it is a fair argument to ask by whom they are to be decoyed and by what means, since ships of an enemy cannot steam on and on for endless days.

In the past it has been accepted in England as an axiom that it is far easier to keep an enemy from getting in than to turn him out when he is in. In other words, prevention is better than cure. There are only two main lines of defence which can commend themselves to a logical, self-respecting island people :

(1) The enemy's coast, the sphere of duty of the British sea-going Fleet.

(2) The British coast, the sphere of duty of the mobile coast defence.

A defensive-offensive off the enemy's coast must be the main defence against invasion. In offering resistance to invasion by taking the offensive on the sea, the British people engage with the enemy when he is at a serious disadvantage owing to the immense difficulties of transport. If it were asked : When is an army not an army ? then surely the reply is : When it is at sea. If a military expedition, even under naval escort, falls in with a British Fleet, it is in a position of abject helplessness. The transports—numbering 150 or 200 at least—can not only not assist in the struggle, but must by their very presence—not in tens but in scores—multiply many times the troubles of the admiral in command of the convoying fleet. It is when the expeditionary army is afloat, and therefore defenceless, that England as a naval Power can fight to greatest advantage.

Once the foreign army has landed the enemy can fight on more equal terms.

There is a second line of defence, not so much against invasion, but against raids, and this is the British coast. The High Seas Navy cannot guarantee this country against raids—that is, against a comparatively small force which may elude the Fleet and be quickly disembarked upon some unprotected portion of the coast.\* As in the case of invasion, the main defence of a maritime people must be on the sea—in the enemy's coast; so in the case of a raid it would seem to follow that the most natural defence must also be on the sea—on the British coast.

In the literature of the "invasion school" little has been said of the progress which has been made in the development of the mobile defences on the east coast of Great Britain. This North Sea littoral is prepared against raids as the Channel littoral was never protected during all the years of our strained relations with France, although, owing to the narrowness of the Channel, the danger then was relatively much greater. During this period there was no mobile defence from Land's End to Dover, nor was there always a single squadron of men-of-war

\* It has never, however, been satisfactorily explained how such a raiding force of a comparatively few thousand men, having painted a country-side red, would escape after their presence had become known to the British Admiralty, nor what influence such pantomimic excursions could have upon the course of a war between two great and war-like peoples. On the admission of the National Service League, the United Kingdom has 120,000 trained men always immediately available in peace-time, and nearly three times as many after the first signal of war.

in British waters or within a week's steaming. The small Channel Fleet, then our only fleet nearer than the Mediterranean, was frequently in the Atlantic, and sometimes in the Mediterranean. In those days England held to the old faith and confided her confidence to a fleet-in-being. There was no active and visible defence of the British seas during this time of our enmity with France, and the English people slept quietly in their beds.

Now, however, the Admiralty have drawn up plans for keeping watch and ward over the whole length of the coast line from the Straits of Dover to the extreme north of Great Britain. There are flotillas of submarines always on duty in the narrows of the Channel, with their bases at Portsmouth and Dover, and large destroyer flotillas are associated with them; there are other submarines, destroyers, and torpedo boats—about a hundred—in the Medway; we have a group of submarines at Harwich, with flotillas of sea-going torpedo-boat destroyers of the most seaworthy type. All these vessels are continually exercising on the east coast. And then, finally, further north there is another flotilla of submarines at Dundee. From Dover right away northward there is also a series of war signal stations on the coast—wireless telegraph stations—linking together the whole of the defences. In this manner a mobile chain has been created up the north-east coast of Great Britain, and steps are being taken to strengthen the links in the chain. In co-operating with this coastal defence force, the patriotism of the civilian popu-

lation can surely find an outlet without abandoning the advantages of position which an island people enjoy.

Whatever may be the intention of the enthusiasts for military aggrandisement—and, no doubt, they mean well—their efforts must be injurious to the best interests of the Empire. They have sown seed which is bearing its inevitable fruit : in spite of all official discouragement, in spite of the most authoritative inquiries, they have given thousands of people the impression that invasion is possible, and that our defence against invasion must take the form of an army founded upon compulsory service.\* At a time of approaching crisis in the history of the Navy, when the national will and the national purse should be concentrated upon the one end—the maintenance of our naval supremacy—public opinion is being misled into byways which have been trodden before and which have always led to one inevitable goal—waste of effort and money, as witness the Palmerston fortifications along the south coast—monuments to national folly, melancholy witnesses to the vain squandering of nine millions sterling. The more the power of the military arm is exaggerated, the more the effort directed to the upbuilding of the Fleet is weakened. Thus the primary defence of the United Kingdom is neglected.

For every pound spent upon military defence,

\* Such an army would have to be in addition to our present Regular Army, as "a nation in arms" would not be available for police work of the Empire, nor for Indian or Colonial Reliefs. In France and Germany, even this—in their case, very limited—duty falls to volunteers.

beyond the clear necessities of the case, the Fleet will lose at least two pounds, because we buy our naval power in the cheapest market. The sum which the United Kingdom can afford for defence is limited—so limited that some pessimists say we must abandon our traditional position on the sea. Owing to social and economic conditions, military force in the United Kingdom is costly while naval force is cheap. According to the National Service League, we are spending £27,300,000 on an Army of 330,000 officers and men, while Germany and France, for £32,000,000 each, are able to secure for home defence armies of 3,750,000 and 3,000,000 respectively. This contrast effectively illustrates the cost of military power in an island kingdom, which, in spite of the agitation of centuries, has always refused to submit to conscription—to barter the advantage of position. On the other hand, for an expenditure of rather over £40,000,000, the United Kingdom obtains a fleet which is at present—whatever may be said of the future—more supreme than ever before in relation to the power of any two rival fleets. For this expenditure the Admiralty provide the country with 136,000 regular officers and men, and 30,000 reservists who have all been trained for several years in the active Fleet, apart from several thousand reservists who have not been so highly trained, and the 30,000 men in the dockyards. By the association of officers and men with the instruments of naval warfare, we obtain a maximum fighting power at a relatively small cost, because we build cheaply and quickly. The fighting power of the naval *personnel* is multiplied



a thousand-fold when it is associated, as it is to-day, with the ships of war.

While, therefore, the United Kingdom has a relatively small and very costly land army, it possesses an exceedingly large and very cheap sea army. Consequently, such comparisons of the military strength of the great nations as are made by the National Service League are entirely misleading. Naval forces are also military forces, and in any careful and complete contrast of military power an investigator is led to the conclusion that the armaments of Great Britain, situated as she is, with her children nations oversea, are more powerful than those of any other country in the world.

England is not the unprotected waif and stray among the nations. On the Continent the frontiers which have to be defended are land frontiers, and therefore the military strength of such Powers takes the form of soldiers, and the population is compelled to submit to the burden of conscription. No one can accurately calculate the actual cost of these Continental armies, because the burden of the nation is not shown in any financial statement. The actual cost is infinitely swollen by the national loss due to the withdrawal of so many men from industrial occupations. In the United Kingdom the defence problem has always called for a different solution. The frontiers are sea frontiers. The Empire is bound together not by great strategical railways, as in Germany, France, and Russia, but by the Seven Seas. This is not a thing to be deplored but to be gloried in. Owing to the development of



steam applied to marine purposes, the British Empire to-day is more consolidated than was the German Empire in 1870. For the defence of her strategical railways and for the protection of her land frontiers, Germany in the intervening forty years has created a vast land army; the United Kingdom, for the defence of her sea frontiers and the protection of her strategical sea routes, has created a vast sea army. It does not follow because Germany, in particular, is expanding her Fleet, that therefore the people of the United Kingdom should be cajoled into a great scheme of military expansion. The logical result of Germany's new policy is the direct contrary to this. The mere fact that Germany is devoting so large a share of her resources—including heavy loans—to the building of her Fleet should be sufficient to convince the British people of the unrivalled value of sea power and cause them to consecrate their resources to further naval expansion.

What is, then, to be thought of Englishmen who, instead of devoting all their energies to measures for keeping the enemy out of the United Kingdom, occupy themselves with plans for fighting him when he is landed, to the inevitable weakening of the main efforts to keep him out? This is not the British policy—it is the negation of all common sense. If there is reason to think that the main defence—the simplest, cheapest, and best, and the one with which we can fight an invading army when it is not an army—is weaker than is essential to reasonable security, then it is the main defence which should be strengthened. If a householder's

doors are flimsy, or the locks faulty, what would be thought of his wasting his substance in putting thicker glass in his windows as a protection against the burglar's visit? It is surprising that the arguments by which the new, but ever old, movement in favour of conscription has been commended to the British people should have misled a single reasonable being. They are historically, economically, and strategically unsound.

The peril which England has to fear is not invasion but starvation—the most terrible of all perils. Apart from the raw material needed by our factories, four out of every five loaves which we eat come to us in ships passing over the frontiers dividing us from possible enemies, frontiers which soldiers cannot, but sailors can, and have, defended. The sober facts as between invasion and starvation may be thus stated :

If you drilled every man in this country to the picture of perfection now possessed by the German Army, or by any other great foreign military force, if every young man of twenty was trained to arms, what would it avail you if the sea was not free and open to bring to these shores raw material and the food upon which we depend?

Your training would be useless, your valour would be thrown away. Your patriotism would waste itself in empty effort. You would be beaten without firing a shot, you would be enslaved without striking a blow, and that result is absolutely assured unless we have the patriotism and the energy to see that the fleets of this country are not merely adequate to fight a battle, but adequate to preserve the great trade routes which are the very arteries and veins through which our life-blood flows.

These are the words not of a pacifist, not of an opponent of every reasonable precaution against every probable peril, but of Mr. Balfour, speaking at York, on January 13th, 1909. England's peril is starvation—not invasion. By cutting off merely a portion of our supplies of food and raw material—after crippling the British Navy ; by getting across some of our trade routes and staying there, an enemy could force this country to a humiliating peace. At times we have only seven weeks' supply of food, and there are 13,000,000 people living on the verge of starvation when commerce is pursuing its peaceful course and prices are normal. Directly a few ships were captured at sea by an enemy, prices would rise, and millions of people, thousands of them idle for want of raw material to work with, would force any Government to capitulate. The suffering mob would take the reins, however large an army were locked by the sea within these shores—also threatened with starvation. When an enemy, without moving a soldier over the water, can starve the British people and their armies by keeping from them one or two out of every five loaves, why should he go to all the trouble and risk of carrying out such a risky and costly operation as invasion ?

It is admitted that a small invasion—a raid of a few thousand men—is possible if an enemy can elude the British Navy. An enemy will fix the size of the raiding force which shall be embarked, not by the millions of men it has available, but by the size of the force it will have to meet if it eludes the main defence, the sea-going fleets, slips past the mobile

coast defence—hundreds of torpedo craft—and gets ashore. The smaller the raiding force, the greater the possibility of missing the British fleets ; but, equally, the smaller the raiding force, the more its incursion approximates to suicide. This is where the Territorial Army's usefulness comes in. It deters an enemy, even when the regular British Army is on distant service, as during the South African War, from committing suicide ; and in order to avoid suicide it must increase its raiding force until the raid becomes an invasion, involving hundreds of ships and elaborate organisation in embarkation and disembarkation, and when it becomes an invasion the project is so big, it involves so much weakness, that the Navy, in the opinion of the country's best experts, is an adequate protection. An invading army, necessitating the collection and movement of thousands of tons of shipping, cannot be smuggled into a country like a box of cigars. A few thousand men in a few ships might be so smuggled, and when they got ashore, even if the Regular Army were abroad, they could not do better than get on their knees and implore the 270,000 officers and men of the British Territorial Army, organised for war as never a citizen army was organised before, to spare their lives.

### III. THE DANGER AND THE DEFENCE.

The problem of home defence is revealed on the highest expert authority as one of easily manageable proportions. The War Office adopts the extreme limit—a possible invasion of 70,000 men—while

the Admiralty holds that "no force of anything approaching that strength could land on these shores." The target at which the British authorities must aim is therefore 70,000 men at an extreme figure. At the same time, the home defence force must be such as can deal with raids by a small force of 2,000 or so which may slip past the Fleets. This is the target. What is the force available to hit it? The position may be stated thus:

POSSIBLE BRITISH DANGER—70,000.

Maximum force which can be landed by an enemy, 70,000 men.

Raiding force which may elude the British Navy's double line of defence—the sea-going fleets and the mobile coast defence of destroyers and submarines—2,000 or so.

BRITISH DEFENCE.

(a) *In Time of Peace*—526,000.

The Two-Power Standard Fleet, supported by a large and active coast defence.

The Regular Army in the United Kingdom of 251,481 (White Paper C.D. 5594).

The Territorial Army of 260,000 men, and 15,000 to 20,000 National Reservists. (Lord Haldane in the House of Lords, November 20th, 1911.)

(b) *In Time of War*—About 375,000.

In the absence of the Expeditionary Force, the Navy would still perform its rôle, and the land forces available would include:

(a) 100,000 Special Reservists—corresponding to the old Militia with improved training.

(b) 260,000 or 270,000 men of the Territorial Army.

(c) 15,000 to 20,000 National Reservists, &c.

The disproportion between the target and the British force maintained to hit it is completely exposed in this brief summary. The task to which the Army Council has set itself is the organisation of the home defence force to deal with the maximum danger of invasion by 70,000 men and the minimum danger of sporadic raids. We have had nothing like the scheme in our history. If the General Staff had done nothing else, it would deserve the gratitude of the people of the United Kingdom for its clear thinking and prompt action in this matter.

From the first it has considered that the important point is the organisation in suitable units of a home force for :

(1) Coast defence.

(2) Defence against raids on a comparatively small scale.

(3) A Central Force capable of reinforcing the local forces required for defence against raids, and also capable of dealing with attack on a larger scale.

In the House of Lords on November 20th, 1911, Lord Haldane explained how these needs were met :

#### COAST DEFENCE.

We rely, to begin with, on the Regular Royal Garrison Artillery and Royal Engineers, who are required to man fixed defences. Next we rely on the Special and Extra Reserve battalions, which, when they have absorbed the unfit left behind by Line battalions, and the surplus Regular Reservists, will amount to 100,000 in all ranks.



These Special Reserve battalions are small in time of peace, but the Extra Reservists and the other additions swell up these third battalions in many cases to 1100 and 1200. We also rely for coast defence on certain technical units of the Territorial Force raised locally in defended ports and trained there. The Army troop battalions and a few batteries from certain Divisions of the Territorial Force are also allotted to garrison duties.

#### DEFENCE AGAINST RAIDS.

This implies that we should have troops along the coast for the purpose of repelling these raids and being in superior force when they come, and, above all, being able to hold them until the Central Force can come up. For that purpose we have assigned eleven Mounted Brigades and ten Divisions of the Territorial Force.

#### THE CENTRAL FORCE.

Three Mounted Brigades and four Divisions of Territorials are allotted as a Central Force, and in the event of serious attack this Force would be augmented by Mounted Brigades and Divisions forming part of the local forces as soon as the main point of attack had been determined. Arrangements are also made to include in the Central Force two Divisions of the Regular Army if, when the necessity for taking expeditionary action arises, the Territorial Force is not considered capable of undertaking the duties of home defence without the aid of Regular troops.

These plans—based on the supremacy of the fleets at sea—constitute a well-thought-out and carefully co-ordinated scheme of defence—giving to the inhabitants of the British Isles an assurance of safety which they have never had before.

We have reached the parting of the ways. There



is no compromise between the development of our present home defence organisation on voluntary lines and the adoption of a full-blooded scheme of conscription based upon two years with the colours, in addition to, and not in substitution for, the present Regular Army which is essential for Imperial defence. There is no praise too high for those citizens who have responded with a devotion unparalleled in the history of civilisation to the call of service in the Territorial Army. The fact that over a quarter of a million officers and men are enrolled in this force, with its onerous terms of service, is a complete and final reply to the jeremiads of those who are continually telling us that patriotism is dead, and that it is therefore necessary to obtain by force service which hitherto has been rendered by choice.

In order to appreciate what has been accomplished, it may be well to present a contrast between the Territorial organisation which we now possess and the force which it superseded. This may be most effectively done in parallel, comparing the Volunteers and Yeomanry in 1905 with the Territorial Army.

YEOMANRY & VOLUNTEERS.			TERRITORIAL ARMY.		
1905.			1911.		
<i>Strength</i>					
Officers	...	9,982*	Officers	...	9,475*†
Other ranks		254,767*	Other ranks	...	254,692**

\* Including Chaplains and Isle of Man Volunteers.

\*† Exclusive of Chaplains and Isle of Man Volunteers.

\*\* Besides these there are National Reservists and :—724 R.A.M.C. Officers available on Mobilisation for General Hospitals, etc., and 926 Officers of the C.T.C. and Officers of the U.L. Total, 1,650.

*Numbers at Camp.*

	8 days	15 days	Officers*	8 days	15 days
Yeomanry (all ranks)	—	23,006*†	Other ranks	1,011	6,975
Volunteers (all rank)	148,925	24,882*		75,522	148,318
				76,534	155,293
Total	148,945	47,918	Total	232,827	
	196,834				

\* Includes Permanent Staff.

\* Exclusive of Permanent Staff.

\* † Return does not indicate number present for less than 16 days.

*Terms of Service.*

Imperial Yeomanry :—Enlistment for 3 years.	4 Years (and re-engagements for 1, 2, 3, or 4 years on the active list—further re-engagements for the Territorial Force Reserve).
Volunteers :—Enrolment. — No fixed period.	

*War Organisation.*

Practically non-existent with the Volunteers. The Infantry were grouped into Brigades commanded partly by Regulars and partly by Volunteer Officers. There were no units of R.H.A., R.F.A., Technical Cos. R.E., A.S.C., units, or organised ambulances, so that in no sense could it be said that the Volunteers could be mobilized as a Field Army.

Practically the same for the Territorial Army as that of the Regulars and organised as a Field Army. The Divisional organisation of the Territorial Force was unknown in the time of the Volunteers.

Imperial Service, October 1, 1911, :—1,140 officers and 19,302 other ranks had undertaken the liability for this service, including practically the whole of King Edward's Horse and the 7th Middlesex Regt.

Is it not apparent from this brief survey that, since 1905, when we were still under the shadow of the war in South Africa and the nation's loins were girded, British patriotism has risen to new heights? Surveying the present situation in contrast with the old, it is impossible to understand the confusion of

thought which urges some publicists to recommend that we should scrap the promising military machine which has been created by the expenditure of so much money and energy in order to embark upon a new and untried method of home defence, uncalled for by the extent of our needs and entirely alien to the temper of the British people.

We have to-day a Territorial Force organised as a field army and under the orders of the best regular officers at the disposal of the War Office. As Lord Haldane has explained, there are fourteen Divisions of the Territorial Force, and there are fourteen Major-Generals of the Regulars who are commanders of Divisions, each of whom has a General Staff officer. Those, of course, are all Regulars. In addition, there are thirty-one Regular Brigade commanders ; there are some ex-Regular commanders still commanding Brigades, but the policy is to substitute active Regular officers on half-pay for the retired officers who were employed during the earlier stages of the Force, so that the Brigade commands may as nearly as possible be filled by Regular officers who would know that their promotion depended on the success they made in handling their Brigades. Nine exceptionally capable Territorial officers have been promoted to command Brigades. There are 406 Regular adjutants and four ex-Regular adjutants. The nation has thus obtained a co-ordinated military machine with a unified policy ; on the one side is the Regular Army with its Expeditionary Force, and on the other side is the Territorial Army organised for home defence, and trained under the

superintendence of over 450 Regular officers. This is the machine which the nation is asked by the National Service League to put on the "scrap heap," for compulsion would ruin the volunteer army and change its whole spirit.

The duty of the people of the British Isles assuredly lies in the opposite direction. The more they realise what has been already achieved, the more whole-heartedly will they support the military administration in its effort to achieve yet greater things. The Territorial Army has its defects—what human institution has not?—but the Territorial Army is young, and year by year it is attaining a higher standard. Destructive criticism may hinder this work, and it will certainly discourage recruits from coming forward to render a service which, however limited the danger of invasion, is one of the most unquestionable expressions of patriotism.

#### IV. AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMME.

Now that the highest military opinion has condemned the scheme of the National Service League, is it too much to hope that this great organisation, with its vast influence and considerable funds, will be turned to useful work? If the leaders who have now had their programme condemned by the naval and military administrations had but the courage to gather up the strength at their disposal and devote it to furthering the carefully thought out plans of the Army Council, what a magnificent work they might accomplish. Let those who appreciate the deep patriotic fervour which inspires the country

consider what enthusiasm would run riot through the counties and towns and villages if the National Service League adopted some such programme as the following :

(1) Compulsory continuation schools for all boys and girls from fourteen to sixteen years of age, the curriculum to include hygiene, technical instruction, and adequate physical drill. Only those who are familiar with the marvellous results of physical drill upon the lads recruited for the Navy can fully appreciate the influence which this reform would have in developing the physique of the nation.

(2) Voluntary military training in cadet corps. The cost of equipment and camp expenses would be provided by the local education authorities, supplemented by the large voluntary subscriptions which now go to the support of the various lads' organisations with an enrolled strength of about 450,000.

(3) Encouragement of the Territorial Force fed from the cadet corps. In carrying out this aspect of its work, the League would occupy very much the same relation to the Territorial Army as the Navy League occupies towards the Navy. Every branch throughout the country would become an educational agency assisting by meetings and lectures in attracting recruits.

This, in brief outline, is surely a policy which would be calculated to win the enthusiastic support of all classes in the community, irrespective of political complexion or sectarian differences. It may be that as a preliminary to the success of such a programme, it would be desirable to carry out a suggestion put forward in a thoughtful article recently published in *National Defence*. Until the main burden of

the cost of the Territorial Army is removed from the Army Estimates, Regular soldiers will always regard it with jealousy. The cost of the Territorial Force amounts to over three millions sterling. It is a large sum, and many soldiers of the Regular Army view this expenditure of Army funds upon what is, after all, only a citizen army for home defence with disfavour. If it were possible to relieve the Army Estimates, in part, at least, of this burden, the attitude of Regular officers towards the Territorial Force would undergo considerable modification.

Such a change would be in line with present policy. One of the main features of Lord Haldane's Territorial Forces Act was the resuscitation of the military position of the Lord Lieutenant. Not only was he to be the acknowledged head of the Territorial County Association, but he was to be given back his old right of either nominating officers or granting commissions to officers for the old Militia, now part of the Territorial Forces. He was to be President of a County Association, which was to be composed of men of position, civil and military, connected with the civil administration, and commercial and professional industry of the country, and belonging to the Territorial battalions of the county regiment. The rally was to be a county rally, and already it has resulted in the drawing together in a remarkable degree, quite unanticipated in some quarters, of all that is best in county life. Under a Unionist Government, this movement will assuredly make further progress. Therefore there



would be nothing parochial in suggesting a county rate.

The suggestion is surely one well worthy of consideration if the Territorial Army is to be freed from those influences which tend to cramp its development and is to be definitely recognised as a citizen army for home defence, depending for its efficiency mainly upon the enthusiasm of county, town and village.

The writer in *National Defence* indicates the machinery by which this reform could be carried out.

We can see no practical means of levying a Territorial rate except through the county machinery. It is ready to hand. Every householder, as is well known, is supplied with a demand-note half-yearly, on which is clearly defined the rates he has to pay—police, road, poor, and other rates. We have shown how these rates have grown up from the old feudal system of personal service, by a process of evolution over many centuries. Every one admits the justice of these rates; they are naturally paid on the presentation of the demand-note. All that would be required would be the addition on this demand-note of a Territorial rate with four conditions of exemption:

(1) Have you served in any of the forces, naval or military?

(2) Are you serving?

(3) Will you join any of these forces during the present year?

(4) Do you belong to the police force of the county?

The exact apportionment of this rate is a question for skilled actuaries and cannot be discussed here, but given that the fundamental principle on which the rate is based is not only a just one, but acceptable to the manhood of the country as not derogatory to the inherent principle,



the freedom of the subject, the apportionment should present no great difficulties. The Swiss rate is calculated on wages earned and income received, and varies from five shillings to £125 or thereabouts. This appears a just apportionment. Its levy would at once remove the present financial difficulties which hinder the efficient development of our Territorial Army system.

Here we have a practical suggestion. It might be possible, on some such basis, to separate the cost of equipment from the cost of training, leaving the former relatively small charge upon the Army Estimates and throwing the latter upon the local rates. Under such conditions the General Staff of the Army would continue to exercise a supervision over the Territorial Forces ; Regular officers would still be associated with the units. We should have a Regular Army definitely maintained for Imperial purposes, and a Territorial Army as definitely maintained for the purposes of home defence and drawing its strength from the hearths and homes of the United Kingdom.

Who can doubt that under such a scheme the Territorial headquarters throughout the country, instead of being as at present dreary, unattractive, prison-like buildings, would become the social centre in each locality, where members of the force would not only gather for military duties, but would engage in those recreations which have been the secret of the *esprit de corps* and high standard of efficiency of the Regular Army and the British Fleet. The coming of the Armada found the English Admirals playing bowls on Plymouth Hoe ; the battle of Waterloo was

won on the playing-fields of Eton; a polo match immediately preceded the battle of Mirwan; the British Fleet at Gibraltar a few years ago played cricket at a moment when war seemed imminent. If the Territorial Army is to rise to its full measure of strength, it must be more intimately associated with the life of the nation, until it becomes the ambition of every able-bodied man to enter its ranks.

Those who urge compulsory military training and a vast increase in our military expenditure at the inevitable cost of the Navy, must get back to first principles, which may be thus summarised:

(1) The United Kingdom consists of two islands, and, therefore, as Earl St. Vincent was never tired of reiterating, any enemy must come over the sea.

(2) The sea can be defended only by fleets, and fleets are, therefore, the main protection not only of an island people, but of a sea-united Empire. The fleet-in-being adequate to defend the whole Empire will be adequate to defend the United Kingdom. The greater includes the less. So long as we hold the seas, we hold not only the Empire but the United Kingdom.

(3) As the Navy (*a*) cannot fight ashore, we maintain an Army which is essentially an oversea force, and not a home defence force, and as (*b*) a raiding force of less than 70,000 might elude the fleets, we need a Territorial Force.

(4) If we had a "nation in arms"

(*a*) The maintenance of the existing supreme sea-going Fleet, with its mobile coast defence force, would still be necessary;

(b) We should still require the present oversea Army, if only for Indian service, and therefore the burden on the country in service and in money \* would be additional to the expenditure on the present military establishment ;

(c) Our present naval and military expenditure of £72,000,000 would be increased purely for the purposes of fighting an invader which on the highest authority cannot reach our shores in force so long as we hold the seas—our Imperial frontiers.

These are the immemorial first principles of British defence—principles which, owing to their breadth, have reacted powerfully on the national character and national destiny ; they have given into our keeping an Empire of one-fourth of the earth's surface. The suggestion that, possessing such a heritage, we should consecrate our thought and energy to the mythical danger of invasion, is the sign not of national health but of national disease.

We shall listen to such invitations to a narrow habit of thought and action at the peril not only of the Empire, but of our own well-being as a people dependent on the sea for our daily bread and our daily work.

England's danger is not invasion, but starvation, and against this there is one, and only one, safeguard—a supreme Fleet—a fleet-in-being which, by the very world-atmosphere which it creates, protects the uttermost outposts of the Empire as efficiently as it protects London, the Empire's nerve-centre.

\* The cost of "a nation in arms" is put at £4,000,000 by the National Service League, and £7,800,000 by the War Office.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE INVASION PROBLEM: ITALY'S "BOLT FROM THE BLUE."

**I**TALY has provided an object-lesson for the British people who are periodically frightened by the dread of invasion. Italy, one of the great naval and military Powers, has carried out the invasion of Tripoli and Cyrenaica. For the first time in European history since railways were laid to facilitate the mobilisation of an expeditionary force on the coast and steam gave to ships a measure of mobility that they never possessed in the days of sails, a military force has been safely conveyed across the sea and disembarked on the exposed littoral of a country which for all practical purposes is an island, since it has on one side the sea and on the others either illimitable stretches of desert or neutral territory. Tripoli has been very aptly described as "an overgrown Arab oasis"; it is backed by sterile hills and possesses a hinterland of leagues of sand. Tripoli could not be more isolated—more completely cut off from such land communications as would have given promise of reinforcements for its defence if it were completely surrounded by water like Great Britain itself. Moreover, there is a close maritime parallel between Tripoli and Italy on the one hand

and Great Britain and Germany on the other. The North Sea, which German transports would have to traverse, is four hundred miles broad, while from Naples, the chief Italian port of embarkation for the expeditionary force to Tripoli, the distance is about five hundred miles. The Italian operation thus furnishes an ideal geographical parallel for the illustration of the alarmists' views as to the British peril of invasion.

Then, again, Italy succeeded in launching a "bolt from the blue," thanks to the disorganisation of the Ottoman Government and the absence of such an efficient secret service as might have given timely warning of Italy's preparations. The peoples of Europe, and least of all the Government of Turkey, had no inkling of Italian plans. It is now known that throughout last summer—in fact, ever since the "Panther's" arrival off Morocco disturbed the tranquillity of Europe—the Italian Cabinet had been preparing for the invasion of Tripoli. A series of veiled and evidently inspired articles in the Rome papers appeared early in the autumn, and in dealing very guardedly with the quarrel with Turkey, prepared the Italian people for some more energetic measures than had hitherto been adopted against the Porte. These articles did not, of course, suggest even remotely the possibility of a forcible seizure of Tripoli, but merely prepared the Italian nation for developments. The *Times* alone—and that paper only once, on September 13th—referred to these articles, and then with no emphasis. It is now known officially that Italy did not even confide her

plans to her allies—Germany and Austria-Hungary.\* She planned secretly and her purpose was to wait until her preparations—naval and military—were complete, and then, at a moment when Europe was absorbed in one of the crises which marked the Franco-German negotiations in connection with Morocco, to throw down the gage, invade Tripoli by the lightning use of her navy and army in co-operation, and present Europe with a *fait accompli* before the Powers could, if they would, intervene. These were Italy's plans. Suddenly Turkey received an ultimatum to cede Tripoli, twenty-four hours only for acquiescence was allowed, and then the fleet proceeded to prepare the way for the expeditionary force, under General Caneva, to which was entrusted the task of taking Tripoli and Cyrenaica.

In order to appreciate the full significance of Italy's design, the character of the expeditionary force must be studied. The military correspondent of the *Times* on October 7th put the numbers at "possibly 35,000 men," and stated that "adding the crews of the transports . . . it is very likely true that there may be 50,000 all told with the armada." On October 10th, however, he corrected this estimate and stated that "in round numbers the combatant strength of General Caneva's command may be set down at 25,000 rifles, 1,000 sabres, and 100 guns." The special correspondent at Tripoli,

\* The Austrian Prime Minister (Baron Gautsch), on October 24th, stated: "That Italy did not first of all acquaint her allies with her intention was, as the Government knew, due to Italy's friendly consideration for her allies."



on October 6th, announced that General Caneva had, with supplementary troops, "about 25,000 in all." The strength of the Turkish forces in Tripoli and Cyrenaica was about 4,000.

The conditions for this warlike operation on the part of Italy were ideal. Italy is one of the world's great naval Powers: she possesses war material which in tonnage comes next in order after that of France, and the character of her *personnel*, and the care taken in its training, have always gained the admiration of sailors. September is the month in which naval and military manœuvres are usually carried out in the Mediterranean, and it was possible, therefore, to have the fleet mobilised and a large part of the army on a war footing without attracting attention. Nearly three months were devoted to the naval and military preparations, which were pressed forward with admirable smoothness and without attracting attention. Before the ultimatum was sent to Constantinople, the whole Italian navy was at sea ready to execute the Government's policy with *éclat*, and, supported by the military arm, it was hoped that Italy would take Europe—not excluding the Italian allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary—completely by surprise, and present a *fait accompli* before an opportunity had occurred for the European concert—or rather European pandemonium—to intervene, even if it agreed in disapproval of Italy's abrupt method of dealing with Turkey. Time was the very essence of the Italian scheme.

From the moment that the Italian fleet was



mobilised, Italy had absolute command of the sea. A small—an insignificant—Turkish naval force, but containing practically all the effective ships of the Turkish fleet, was, it is true, at Beirut under its British officers, Rear-Admiral Hugh Williams and his staff, when the ultimatum expired. Italy was bound to give it safe passage through the Dardanelles in order to enable the British officers—neutrals—to land. Once this squadron—two battleships, the obsolete vessels sold by Germany to her “friend,” and a few cruisers—had entered the Dardanelles and obtained safety, it remained there, as it was bound to remain in face of such overwhelming odds. Italy, without firing a gun or discharging a torpedo, had the absolute control of the sea so desirable for the execution in orderly fashion of an invasion scheme. Lord Roberts—with his knowledge as a field-marshal of sea transport and naval affairs—has always urged that only a merely temporary and local command of the sea was necessary to enable an invasion scheme to be carried out: Italy was infinitely more fortunate, because for all practical purposes of war the Turkish navy did not exist.

Nor was this Italy's only advantage. Italy had command of the sea, and Tripoli was in all essential respects an island—a place completely surrounded by sea and sand. Therefore Turkey could take no steps to reinforce the few thousand soldiers on whom the defence of her threatened territory devolved, with such assistance as Arabs might lend. Both Powers can place in the field about a million and a quarter of men. But the loss of the sea-command

by Turkey, owing to her naval inferiority, meant that her army was imprisoned in Europe and could not strike a blow for her African possessions. There was no opportunity for Turkey to gather up her immense military strength and deal with the Italian invaders, because the Italian fleet held the only route—the sea—by which reinforcements could be dispatched.

Such were the military plans of Italy, long and carefully prepared. The subsequent events—the actual sequence of the war—may be best revealed in diary form so as to call to mind not only Italy's action, but the atmosphere in Europe at the time—one of terror of a general conflagration.

#### OPENING OF THE WAR.

June 22nd.—The Coronation of King George (*a*) preceded by a calm throughout Europe; (*b*) marked by the presence in London of the German Crown Prince and representatives of the nations of the whole world; (*c*) followed by many prophecies of a period of peace and good will in the West.

July 3rd.—The German gunboat "Panther" arrives at Agadir; reopening of the Morocco question by Germany, with a consequent unsettling of the European situation.

July (middle).—Italy decides to make preparations for the seizure of Tripoli, taking advantage of the preoccupation of Europe with the Morocco crisis. Complete silence of the Italian Press.

July, Aug., and Sept.—Franco-German negotiations continue, Great Britain supporting France.

Aug. 25th–Sept. 14th.—Articles in Italian papers—apparently inspired—foreshadowing energetic measures against Turkey, and preparing the Italian nation for strong action by the Government.

Sept. 18th–22nd.—Grave European crisis owing to Germany's attitude towards France. Orders issued to the British Fleet in view of possible eventualities.

Slump on the Berlin Bourse owing to the fear of an immediate outbreak of war. Great financiers in Berlin exert their influence in favour of peace.

Sept. 23rd.—An agreement between France and Germany on the former's status in Morocco reached. Crisis ended.

Sept. 25th.—First news published of Italy's demand upon Turkey for the cession of Tripoli and Cyrenaica.

Sept. 28th.—Ultimatum handed to the Ottoman Government demanding the cession of Tripoli and the whole of Cyrenaica, "*in default of which the Italian Government will be obliged to proceed to the immediate execution of the measures destined to secure the occupation.*"

Entire fleet of Italy having been mobilised on or about Sept. 19th, it is announced that it has left for its war stations.

The *Daily Telegraph's* correspondent at Rome telegraphs :

It is impossible at the present moment to obtain or send full details about the expedition, but it may be stated beforehand that the operations have been fully studied and prepared for a long time past. It is expected that they will have the success hoped for, and be worthy of Italy and her navy and army.

Sept. 29th, 2.30 P.M.—Ultimatum expires and war opens.

Oct. 1st.—Italian squadron arrives off Tripoli and destroyer enters the harbour and demands the surrender of the town. Turkish authorities refuse.

Oct. 2nd–3rd.—Turkish troops withdraw to interior, leaving only a small force in the few forts, armed with obsolete guns.

Oct. 3rd, 3.30 P.M.—Bombardment of Tripoli by the fleet begins.

Oct. 4th.—Bombardment continues, and a portion of the Italian naval brigade lands to the west of the town.

Oct. 5th.—Tripoli formally occupied.

#### SAILING OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

Oct. 7th (Saturday).—The military correspondent of the *Times* states :

The first transports to leave were naturally those from the most motherly ports of embarkation, namely, Genoa, Leghorn, and Ancona. From Genoa the first transports left on Wednesday night. They should have picked up the Naples convoy on Thursday night and have reached the Straits of Messina yesterday morning, at which time the transports coming from the Adriatic should also have arrived if the movement had been well arranged.

Allowing the greater part of Friday for marshalling the convoy, *which is said to consist of 60 ships*, and assuming that it might be considered advisable to reach the coast of Tripoli at dawn in order to have a long spell of light for the landing operations, *it is possible that this morning may see the armada off the coast of North Africa.\**

Delays are possible owing to the breakdown of ships, weather conditions, and reports of hostile naval opera-

\* As will be seen this prophecy was not fulfilled.

tions,\* but there is no certain proof at present that there is much amiss with the Italian plan, for the execution of which preparations appear to have been very thorough and complete.

Oct. 10th (morning).—First detachment of the expeditionary force lands at Marsa Tobruk, a bay 700 miles to the east of Tripoli, without incident. (*Times*, Oct. 11th).

Oct. 11th.—Nineteen transports conveying Italian troops to Tripoli seen to the north-east of Malta, escorted by three battleships, one cruiser, and eight torpedo-boats.

Oct. 11th, 3 P.M.—The van of the Italian expeditionary force arrives at Tripoli in two ocean liners. "I strongly suspect," the *Times*' special correspondent telegraphs, "that the arrival was due to an urgent appeal by the navy for troops."

#### WORK OF DISEMBARKATION.

Oct. 12th (morning).—The nineteen transports conveying the second division of the expeditionary army arrive at Tripoli escorted by part of the Italian fleet and disembarkation begins at once and proceeds smoothly. Besides the escort accompanying the transports, their passage was further protected by a chain of war vessels extending to within 180 miles of Tripoli, and consisting of the torpedo-cruiser "Coatit" and a number of destroyers and sea-going torpedo-boats. (Reuter's correspondent at Tripoli.) No stores landed.

The military correspondent of the *Times* admits that "There is some evidence of disappointment in

\* Turkey had no men-of-war with which to take hostile action.

Italy that the dispatch of the armada has been so long delayed," but he claims, as an afterthought, apparently, that there is "*no military need for haste.*"

Oct. 13th.—General Caneva, Commander-in-Chief, lands at Tripoli amid the salutes of the fleet.

Oct. 14th.—Disembarkation of the *impedimenta* of the first division of the expeditionary force still proceeds.

#### COMPLETION OF THE INVASION.

Oct. 15th.—Fourteen transports conveying the last portion of the first division of the Italian expedition drop anchor off Tripoli and disembarkation begins.

Oct. 17th.—Italian transports, convoyed by warships under Admiral Aubrey, sail from Port Augusta and Syracuse for Bengazi and Derna.

Oct. 18th.—Derna is bombarded by Italian warships.

Oct. 19th.—Bombardment of Bengazi and troops land. Second convoy of troops arrives off Bengazi, escorted by eleven men-of-war.

The *Times* special correspondent at Tripoli states :

It would seem that the first division complete constitutes the legitimate expeditionary force for Tripoli ; the other mobilised division will be split up and will supply detachments for Homs, Bengazi, and Bomba, and for the base of the troops here. The staff announces that all the troops now landed belong to the first division.

It seems to me a model of completeness, judged by the standards of European warfare ; but, as an expeditionary force, the rationing of it and of the big field artillery horses will be a slow affair from an open roadstead, in spite of the auxiliary transport provided by Sicilian feluccas.



The *Times* special correspondent at Tripoli in another message telegraphs :

The Italians may congratulate themselves that the weather has held for the disembarkation here. Matters have become difficult before Homs, where a landing is delayed owing to the weather, though the fleet has fulfilled its duty in the reduction of the land defences. At Derna similar difficulties were encountered.

Oct. 20th.—Reuter reports from Tripoli that the landing operations have been seriously impeded by bad weather, but that on the 19th work was resumed.

Oct. 22nd.—The disembarkation of troops, both at Bengazi and Homs, proceeds all day without any disturbance.

A wireless message received at Tripoli from Derna announces successful occupation of that place.

It is not necessary to continue this diary of the war further and trace the fortunes—or, more correctly, the misfortunes—of the Italian troops. As a study in invasion the story is complete. The feat of transportation across a maritime track of about the same width as the North Sea provides in itself sufficient material for consideration for the moment.

We have no details of the experiences of the transports, but it is known that the sea passage somewhat resembled the voyage of the Baltic Fleet. The troops, unused to the sea—an element full of mystery and danger to landsmen—were in a state of terror. Such men-of-war as Turkey possessed were known to be inside the Dardanelles ; the Duke of the Abruzzi, with no little flourish of achievement, had dealt with the little Customs' gunboats in the



Adriatic, and it was a notorious fact that Turkey had not a single submarine. Yet the soldiers, in unfamiliar surroundings, were panic-stricken as the string of transports, with their heavy naval guard, supplemented by a chain of mosquito craft, moved at a ten-knot speed towards Tripoli. The expedition of sixty ships, as has been stated, moved in sections. Each section was a straggling mob of shipping; the captains had no knowledge how to manœuvre their vessels in company, or to keep station like men-of-war, and the danger of collision, ever present by day, was so imminent by night that the ships almost stopped. To the soldiers the night conditions were thus worse than those by day; every shadow on the water was some impossible, mysterious craft of the enemy destined to launch torpedoes and send them to the bottom. If only there was a Pierre Loti or a Kipling on board, what a picture we may yet have of this armada, split up into sections and sent forth with loads of terror-stricken landsmen. The actual achievement bore no resemblance to a "bolt from the blue"; the only "blueness" present was that which assailed the spirits of the troops.

In the light of Italy's achievement, all preconceived opinions on the question of invasion must be revised. Here we have not the theory, but the practice of invasion as carried out by a great Power with the advantages of

- (1) absolute and permanent command of the sea;
- (2) over a million tons of steam shipping capable of being utilised for army transport; and

(3) a vast military organisation numbering about one and a quarter million men.

In preparing the plans for the invasion of Tripoli and Cyrenaica, the Government at Rome had the advice of the most competent staffs at the War Office and at the Admiralty, and from the first moment that war threatened the Italian authorities enjoyed the benefit of a practically unanimous public opinion in support of their policy.

Time was believed to be the essential factor of success. Italy's aim was to use her naval and military machines with such rapidity that by the time the other nations of Europe had realised what was afoot she would be able to point to a *fait accompli*. The whole resources of the Italian Government were concentrated in secret upon the project for three months.

According to the military theorists under Lord Roberts, who pose as expert authorities on the purely naval operation of the sea-transport of an army, the Italian scheme ought to have been a triumphant success. The theory of the invasion school is admirably summarised in the following passage from the volume by Lord Roberts entitled *Facts and Fallacies* :

There are a dozen German ships that could carry between them an invading army of much nearer 200,000 than 70,000 men. A dozen, or even two dozen ships, starting from several different ports and escorted by destroyers, are something very different from the fleet of small transports covering twenty miles of sea, with a whole battle-fleet in attendance, with which our vendors of soporifics would comfort us. With the magnificent detraining and berthing facilities of the great German

ports,\* and the high speed of the vessels themselves, the period required for the whole operation of invasion, from the time that the soldiers step on board to the time that they begin their advance on the other side, is much more likely to be three days than three weeks.

In spite of Lord Roberts's theories, expounded from time to time by the military correspondent of the *Times*, the Italian scheme of invasion, under ideal conditions, failed in its essential character, although the actual declaration of war was delayed until the moment arrived when it was thought that everything was in readiness.

The ultimatum was handed to the Turkish Government on September 28th, when the Italian fleet had already been mobilised for over a week. The first detachment of the expeditionary force was not landed in Tripoli until twelve days later, and the disembarkation was not completed until the 22nd or 23rd of October—a *period of three weeks and four days from the time when the ultimatum was issued*, and even then there is no evidence that all the artillery and stores had been got ashore, so that probably the actual period was at least a month.

Let it be remembered that Italy transported only 25,000 men, that she enjoyed throughout absolute command of the sea, and that the transports had to

\* Italy has more ports than Germany and they are well equipped. The difficulty of invasion lies, as Italian experience shows, not in embarking the troops, but in convoying the transports and disembarking the men from a roadstead open to the weather, with the continual danger of attack by submarines and destroyers. The larger the transports employed, the further they must remain from the shore and the greater the peril of attack, and the more onerous the task of disembarkation.

cover only four or five hundred miles, and what must be the verdict upon Lord Roberts' alarms? In the light of Italy's carefully planned and long delayed operation of invasion, what must be thought of the soldier's nightmare of an England at the mercy of an enemy who is secretly to land on our coast an army of 150,000 or even 200,000 men, without let or hindrance from the British fleets—not one fleet, as nervous soldiers imagine—of greater fighting strength than any two navies in the world, and superior at the present moment to the three great navies of Europe—Germany, France, and Italy. According to the admission of the military correspondent of the *Times*, Italy requisitioned sixty steamships for the transport of her force of 25,000 men, or, at the outside estimate, 35,000 men; what number of transports then would be actually required by Germany to bring to the British shores 150,000 men? \* This little sum might provide interesting occupation during the winter evenings for those who have been led by soldiers to believe that the sailors' tasks of embarkation, transportation, and disembarkation are extremely simple ones, and can be completed in so short a time as to enable an enemy to be on the road to London in a matter of three days from the time of sailing. The fanciful theories spun by the "invasion school" have been completely exposed after the most careful investigation first by the Unionist Government under Mr. Balfour, and then

\* Very big ships are unsuitable, as Italy found, for use as transports, because, owing to their deep draught, they have to keep so far out from the shore—perilously exposed to bad weather—and this factor adds immensely to the difficulties of disembarkation.

by the present Government under Mr. Asquith, and now by the actual experience of war they are shown to be idle inventions based upon ignorance of all the circumstances that govern one of the most difficult of all naval operations—invasion oversea.

The experience of Italy not only reveals the impracticability of sudden invasion of an island kingdom by an expeditionary force of the character so often described by Lord Roberts, but it also shows the extreme difficulty which an enemy would have in landing on our shores small raiding forces of even ten or five thousand men. In the first place, the difficulty of transport of a small raiding force is shown by the story of the Italian invasion to be far greater than has been imagined; and secondly, there is no point on the British coast on which a raiding force could land without the most serious opposition from the Navy. Tripoli possessed no system of coastal defence; Great Britain possesses a system of mobile defence on her coasts, elastic, active, and efficient.

There was never a time in our history when our coasts were so vigilantly guarded as to-day. Commenting upon the development of the submarine and the consequent abolition of fixed mine-fields—which were a more imminent danger to our men-of-war than to the men-of-war of an enemy—a writer in the *Quarterly Review* gives the following description of the progress which has already been made in evolving a scheme of coastal defence independent of the main fleets of the Empire, which are thus free for oversea work as they never were free before :

Before this decision (the abolition of fixed mine-fields) was reached, the Admiralty had already withdrawn from their stations the coast and port guard-ships, and utilised the *personnel* in strengthening the fighting force of the Navy. The place of these stationary ships, half-manned and inefficient, has been taken by large flotillas of destroyers and torpedo-boats, numbering over 150, some fully manned and others with large nucleus crews ; and the Admiralty has established flotillas of submarine craft, while the money hitherto devoted to the fixed mine-fields is now expended upon a large and increasing fleet of mine-laying and mine-sweeping ships.

These changes in the method of defending the British coast were carried out by the Board of Admiralty, of which Lord Fisher was the principal expert member, and they were endorsed and developed further by his successor, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Arthur Wilson. This officer has recorded publicly his opinion as to the impracticability of invasion of the British Isles under the conditions of defence which now exist.

Turkey had no submarines, and yet the Italian troops were terror-stricken. Let it be well realised what the moral effect of British submarines would be on the men of an army when on the sea, and therefore not a disciplined force but a mob of landmen with their nerves "on the jump." The more the powers of the latest British submarines are appreciated, the more conclusively it will be realised that in these craft, supported by destroyers and the main fleets, we have a powerful and complete defence against invasion. What manner of vessels the new British submarines of the "D" and "E" classes



are a correspondent of the *Daily Express* has testified : \*

The former are of 600 tons displacement, and the latter will be of 800, or, perhaps, even 1000 tons. In speed there is no considerable advance, sixteen knots on the surface and ten submerged being the figures given for " D " class. But the radius of action is enormously increased. All British boats, from " B " class onwards—that is, sixty-six in number—have a surface radius of 2000 miles, which in " D " class is doubled, and in " E " class will be greater still.

There is no need to give the submerged radius, for these boats pop under almost like a wild duck, and, therefore, never need to travel far submerged. The earlier French boats used to take about five minutes to submerge. Moreover, instead of being smooth water craft, they are about the most weatherly ships in the Navy ; they need no convoy, but can go anywhere with the aid of a single ship to guide them.

They have traversed the North Sea from the mouth of the Thames to the Firth of Forth in winter ; even some of the older ships of the " A " class made the voyage from Portsmouth to Hong Kong with their crews living on board.

" D " class and all subsequent ships, at any rate, will be fitted with a wireless instalment, and will carry one or more quick-firing guns. The old " hog-back " form of hull has disappeared, and the boats are now ship-shape, affording a flush deck on which the guns can be mounted, a special cam-mounting permitting them to be brought to the deck level and housed when the boat is about to be submerged.

They are comfortable beyond the dreams of a few

\* These particulars are known to be generally accurate, and are here admirably stated.

years ago, with hammocks for the officers and men, and with knee-hole desks for the principal officers.

And now, in the words of the same writer, what is the significance of this development of the submarine?

It means that the "mightiest Naval Power" has taken the defensive weapon designed by a navy conscious of its own inferiority, and forged from it the very spear-head of its offensive warfare. It used to be a saying of Lord Fisher's that, should war break out, the ships which people expected to be the last to go would be the first.

Whatever the ships to which he referred, next in their wake will follow the submarines, in advance of the destroyers, the swift cruisers, the armoured cruiser squadrons, the battle-fleet.

They will lie off the enemy's ports, or in the estuaries of his rivers; fortified islands and shore batteries will have no terrors for them, and one day, if expectation be fulfilled, the enemy will find the "devil among his tailors"; submarines among his battleships, assembled at an anchorage thought to be secure from all attack. Then he must either sink where he lies or go out and seek his fate in battle.

Some persons may say that two can play at that game! Not so. Only the hand that grasps the haft can drive home the spear-head. It is only the Power which holds the open sea with its above-water craft—destroyers, cruisers and battleships—which can use its submarines offensively. This is evidently recognised by the Germans, with their usual clear-sightedness. Their boats, exceedingly good of their kind, have only a displacement of 300 tons, according to one authority, or 180 tons, according to another, and a maximum radius of 1000 miles. These are vessels meant for

defensive warfare, or, at most, for service in the land-locked waters between Kiel and the Belts.

These British vessels—for use as necessity directs off our own or an enemy's coasts—are not in the air ; they exist with crews trained and ready for war. They are never absent from our Eastern littoral ; they can never be “decoyed” away. They are the final answer to Lord Roberts's nightmare that the main fleets of the Empire may be “decoyed” away from the strategic centre which they have been built and trained to hold against all comers, and that we shall be at the mercy of a crazy mob of transports.

As Sir Arthur Wilson, the late First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, has declared, invasion even by 70,000 men is an impossibility. Lord Roberts, a soldier most of whose active career was spent on the plains of India, has endeavoured to convince the public that on this purely naval question—the transport of an army oversea and its disembarkation on the shores of an island which never has nor can have less than 300,000 men under arms—the supreme naval authority, with over fifty years of sea experience, is wrong, and that he, with fifty years of land experience, is right. The opinions expressed by Sir Arthur Wilson are those of every naval officer who has ever held high naval command from Jervis, Collingwood, and Nelson downwards.

Finally let it be remembered that the misfortunes of the Italian Expeditionary Force, owing to the absence of any Turkish men-of-war in the Mediterranean, began after the actual invasion had been

completed. After an interval of about a month from the declaration of hostilities, the Italians succeeded in landing 25,000 men on the African coast, and for many months they have had the greatest difficulty in holding their positions in face of guerilla warfare conducted by a few thousand Turks supported by Arabs—a contemptibly small, untrained, and undisciplined force. The experiences of the Italian troops are hardly calculated to encourage an enemy to invade the British Isles (with never less than 300,000 men under arms), even if he were convinced that he could triumph over the difficulties attendant upon an attempt to land in a country possessing a supreme sea-going Navy and an active and efficient mobile coast defence.

## CHAPTER VIII

### DEFENCE AND FINANCE.

**N**OT since the Volunteer movement sprang spontaneously into existence in 1859, owing to the fears occasioned by the attitude of Napoleon III and the French Press towards England, has there been such a widespread feeling as exists to-day, if not of national insecurity, at least of anxiety, as to the adequacy of our armaments to protect British interests. There was never a time when such influential and well-organised effort was made to impress upon the nation the necessity for more effort and greater expenditure. We must have unassailable supremacy at sea—that is admitted—and ashore, it is urged, we must spend and be spent in order to provide improved fortifications, a larger expeditionary force, and a national army—"a nation in arms"—for home defence.

These suggestions are usually considered separately and without reference to their bearing on finance. But it is essential that the proposals should be grouped in proper perspective in order that we may ascertain exactly what is demanded, the need which each scheme is intended to meet, and the probable burden which it will cast on the Exchequer.

The time has surely come when the nation, in studying the problems of defence, should deliberately consider the important question of

Ways and Means. Every session the House of Commons, it is true, nominally resolves itself into a Committee of Ways and Means, but the procedure is farcical in its results. The debates are divided into water-tight compartments. On one occasion the Committee will take into consideration the Civil Service Estimates, and forty or fifty members, who are particularly interested in this aspect of government, will "keep a house," while, one after another, grievances are brought forward, the remedy in each case being increased expenditure. On another occasion the Navy Estimates are discussed without any regard to the general problem of Imperial defence, the supporters of the Government being mainly occupied in replying to points of criticism on details of administration which are advanced by members of the Opposition. The same process of discussion takes place on the Army Estimates. There is never a debate in the House of Commons in Committee of Ways and Means on the relations between the various national services and the sums involved in their maintenance. The House has lost all sense of economy : all its members are for economy in principle and lavish expenditure in details. Some urge the claims of social reform, others those of agriculture and industrial development, others, again, are eloquent in appealing for further outlay on the Navy, the Army, the Territorials, aeroplanes, airships or fortifications. From every quarter of the House the Government of the day is pressed to spend more money. In practice, Parliament has forgotten what economy means, and year by year in thoughtless mood



adds to the burden of taxation in a manner which would fill Mr. Gladstone with indignation, and would even prompt Lord Beaconsfield—also an economist in his day—to a sardonic protest, were these statesmen still with us. We have reached a stage in national extravagance when, in view of the new suggestions for expenditure, taxpayers and ratepayers, in their own defence, may wisely review the position.

§ In the first place, can it be said that the defensive services have been or are being “starved”? What burden do the Navy and Army at present cast on the ratepayers? This is the first question which naturally arises in face of suggestions for increased armaments. The cost of defence must bear some reasonable relation to the ability of the people to meet it. Admitting that without security there can be no Imperial, commercial or social progress, and that, therefore, defence against inimical forces outside the Empire has the first claim on a people, every care must be exercised so to adjust the expenditure on the sea and land services that it may not become so oppressive as to arrest Imperial and national well-being and development. The amplitude of a nation’s armaments is not necessarily a sign of health or virility. In the effort to provide against every possible contingency, not by policy but by arms, a government may gradually impoverish a people, and thus by the very completeness of the machinery of defence defeat under peace conditions the ends in view—ability to bear the strain of war.

The British nation does not exist for the Navy or the Army. These are its two very essential servants.

It has sea forces because the Empire is a sea Empire, and it has an Army (which the Navy must be strong enough to carry on its back to different parts of the Empire without fear of molestation) because the fleet's activities are necessarily restricted to the sea. The two defensive services are instruments of policy. When policy becomes the instrument of the defensive services—of which there have been illustrations in recent European, and particularly German, history—then the situation is perilous to the State.

Keeping in view these general considerations, and the repeated suggestions that the Navy and Army are being "starved," what is the record of the last twenty years? Since 1890 the expenditure has steadily and rapidly risen, as the following figures illustrate:

Year.	Navy.	Army.	Total
1890 ..	£15,554,929	£17,560,023	£33,114,952
1895 ..	19,724,000	18,459,800	38,281,800
1900 ..	29,520,000	24,473,000*	53,993,000
1905 ..	33,300,000	28,850,000	62,150,000
1910 ..	40,604,000	27,760,000	68,364,000
1911 ..	43,300,000†	27,690,000	70,990,000
1912 ..	44,600,000	27,860,000	72,460,000

One gratifying fact is revealed in these figures. For many decades we spent year after year far larger sums on the Army than were devoted to the Navy. Down to 1896 the outlay on the former always exceeded—in 1887 by nearly six millions sterling—that on the latter—the first line of defence. Then under the influence of the keen naval rivalry of France and Russia, and the awakening spirit of

\* Apart from war charges. † The Navy Estimates of 1911 were underspent to the extent of £1,600,000.

the over-sea dominions, successive Governments—Unionist and Liberal—made a strenuous effort to check the expansion of the Army votes. Thus, and thus only, by limiting our secondary defensive expenditure—has the continued supremacy of the seas been maintained. Despite this effort, the outlay upon the Army has increased by upwards of ten millions in the past two decades, and we have reached the unparalleled expenditure in 1912 of over 72 millions on the two services, or considerably more than twice the sum which the War Office and the Admiralty received in 1890.

But this is only a portion of the burden falling on the taxpayer and ratepayer—who, after all, is in many cases one and the same. The significance of the present “war budget” can be appreciated only when it is studied in association with the growth of the cost of national and local government. These figures are essential in considering the new demands for expenditure on defence, if the nation would see clearly the road which it is asked to tread. For corresponding years to those given for the Navy and Army the statistics are as follows :

	Revenue Expenditure (In millions.)			Debt (In millions.)		
	National.	Local.	Total.	National.	Local.	Total.
1890 .	87.7	61.6	149.3	683.5	—*	—
1895 .	97.8	77.2	175.0	652.3	—*	—
1900 .	110.5	97.7	218.2	704.0	381.5	1,185.5
1905 .	142.9	132.6	275.5	789.0	564.7	1,353.7
1910† .	162.3	140.0	302.3	741.0	580.0	1,321.5

\* Not available.

† The Estimates for 1911 were £168,909,000, and in 1912 they rose to £177,000,000 exclusive of the Local Taxation Account and of Capital Account.

These twenty years—1890–1910—can hardly be regarded as a period of economical administration, either by the national or local authorities. The sum raised by taxes and rates has more than doubled since 1890 ; the National Liabilities have been also increased, and the local debt—though official figures for 1890 are wanting—has certainly been trebled, while the population has grown by only about four millions, or 10 per cent.

Colossal as these figures are, they mark only a stage in the upward incline. Apart from the inevitable, and indeed almost automatic rise in future years of the outlay by the local authorities of the United Kingdom—and of England more particularly—it is common knowledge that we are committed, or are about to be committed, to a further vast increase in national expenditure. Last spring the Government had to provide about two-and-a-half millions sterling for initiating the twin schemes of insurance against unemployment and invalidity ; the “ State subsidy ” has been fixed on a scale “ twice as liberal as that given by Germany for the same purpose.”

It may be objected that the non-contributory scheme of Old Age Pensions is unsound, that the state of the national finances does not justify expenditure upon insurance against unemployment or invalidity, that the labour exchanges are costly and ineffective. These arguments have been, indeed, advanced, but they are valueless. Whatever may be the party complexion of the Government in power in future years, these charges are admitted to be

permanent, and they will continue to grow—it may be by a lowering of the qualifying age for pensions, an increase in the amount of the pension, a variation in the income debarring receipt of a pension, or in some other direction. There are many avenues open to further outlay on these services. The thin end of the wedge having been inserted, it is impossible to foresee how far in the battle for power between parties it may not be driven—with a continually rising charge on the Exchequer. The expenditure on the social programme is what foreign financiers would term recurring ordinary expenditure—permanent charges which will have to be met year by year. Even in war time they could not be decreased, and under normal conditions they will increase. Be the Government in future years Liberal or Unionist, not a comma in any of the various social reform Acts will be altered except for the purpose of increasing the outlay.

If not a single one of the schemes for more costly defensive arrangements be adopted—if the Government lays down not a single new man-o'-war, the Budget for 1913-14 must be framed to provide about £180,000,000, apart from about £9,500,000 due to the Local Taxation Account—or about £190,000,000 in all. Ten years ago, when the payments from the Exchequer were only just over £120,000,000—including the Local Taxation Account—Lord Welby, with thirty-six years of experience at the Treasury, remarked :

The question is whether, with the large increase of taxation during the last ten years, we have not got very

near to the limits of what the country can bear, and whether there will not inevitably come a cold fit which will leave the country with its defensive preparations in a worse condition than they would have been had expenditure gone on at a more moderate rate.

In this sentence Lord Welby indicated a grave danger—a danger which has increased in proportion to the growth of expenditure. The pressure of Imperial and local taxation is being felt seriously by many sections of the community—by less wealthy professional men, by the middle classes with “appearances” to maintain, and by the very poor struggling to keep body and soul together. The amount of “free income” which any person of modest means possesses is rapidly decreasing owing to the high level of expenditure by the State and by local authorities. This must react on thrift, and Lord Rosebery has reminded us that it is having this effect already. In any case it is apparent that the more revenue the central and local authorities extract annually from the country, the smaller the reserve resources available in time of war. Battles are fought not merely with battleships and battalions but with money. We overthrew Napoleon mainly because our reserve financial resources were so great : we gained ascendancy in South Africa largely by the same means.

In view of the high standard of expenditure which we have already reached, of the commitments, with the more or less tacit concurrence of all parties, to a yet higher standard, and of the existing capital liabilities of the central and local authorities, the



most patriotic taxpayer must feel compelled to examine critically any suggestion for re-casting our traditional defensive policy.

Even Lord Roberts' most military-minded supporters admit that the Navy must come first, that it is the essential defence of a sea Empire, to which all other measures of defence must be subsidiary. It is, in fact, the only tangible link of Empire to the Imperialist, and the bulwark of Free Trade to the Free Trader. The maintenance of a sea-united Empire in peace and security depends absolutely upon the efficiency and sufficiency of the Fleet. This is one of those axioms which are so generally accepted that they are in danger of being ignored. If our dependence upon the sea for all we need were not frequently forgotten, what speaker or writer would have the courage to compare the British defensive organisation with the organisations of such countries as France, Germany, Russia, and even Switzerland? No comparison is possible, because circumstances differ fundamentally. It is a misfortune that some of the most patriotically-minded public men, instinct with the desire to safeguard the Empire, fail to realise that the British Empire is a thing apart and alone. There has been nothing like it in the history of the world, and there can be nothing like it in the future until Britannia loses her hold on the sceptre of the seas and the Empire falls or, by some hostile hand, is cut to pieces.

In every school under the British flag there ought to hang a large map coloured very differently from any maps now existing. This map would show

the whole world on Mercator's projection. The territory forming the British Empire might be coloured pink, foreign countries might be shown in some other colour—it matters not what—so that the colour red—British red—were reserved exclusively for the seas. The existing atlases all fail to remind the student of the fact that the Imperial federation has been created and can only continue to exist so long as British supremacy on the world's seas is maintained in unimpaired strength. The important fact is not that the British flag floats over about one-fourth of the world's surface, but that the British Navy must be so strong as to be able to dominate the oceans which divide this Imperial federation into its component parts, or rather unite it into one vast political body. By some such map as this, with the sea a uniform British red, it might be possible to remind all the people of the British Empire that not a merchant ship can move, bearing food and raw material, and not a soldier can be transported from one Dominion to another so as to carry out a concentrated military movement, unless the naval forces of the Empire are adequate to keep open the sea communications. The Navy must come first, because the Empire exists on and by the sea. Except the Fleet is supreme the Imperial federation is dissolved, and every Prime Minister of the oversea dominions and all the oversea peoples become virtually prisoners within their own sea-girt frontiers directly the British people are involved in war. If the Empire possessed an army as great as the armies of the Triple Alliance rolled into one, the

necessity for a supreme Fleet would still remain. There can be no difference of opinion on this matter, and therefore in any consideration of national ways and means the Navy must come first in our defensive organisation.

It is also not less generally admitted that in a few years, owing to the unprecedented efforts of other Powers to increase their fleets, the Navy Estimates will probably amount to little short of £50,000,000. We can either meet this charge entirely out of revenue, partly out of revenue and partly out of loan, or entirely out of loan. Financial authorities agree that a State administered on economic principles can only borrow for two purposes—it may raise a loan to meet a sudden emergency, such as war, or to carry out works of permanent utility. We are not faced by a “naval crisis” in the ordinary acceptation of that word, but we have to meet a permanent increased charge for the Fleet. As Mr. Balfour remarked in his speech at the Albert Hall on May 8th, 1909, owing to the expansion of foreign fleets, the British people are called upon “to make gigantic sacrifices in the next ten years, and perhaps long after that.”

The race of armaments will continue for generation after generation—so far as we can foresee—and the proposal that we of this generation should meet our liabilities by raising a loan is neither courageous, financially sound, nor likely at this date to check rivalry as a demonstration of national resolve. It is not courageous because we should thereby be embarrassing those who

come after us who will have their own problems to meet. It is not financially sound because every addition to the National Debt decreases the resources available in time of war. It would not be an effective check on competition. The charges imposed upon the country for the Fleet are charges which must be met out of revenue, and they have the first claim upon the Exchequer. Thus, in considering national ways and means, it must be realised first and foremost that for some years to come the Navy will absorb annually sums varying in amount from forty-five to fifty millions sterling.

Admitting the primacy of the Fleet, what is the exact proportion of the military problem which has led to the movements for a vast increase of the Regular Army, and more coastal fortifications, and a demand that we should have "a nation in arms"?

So far as the people of the United Kingdom are concerned, there is no danger of invasion,\* so long as the Fleet is maintained in adequate strength,

\* It is well to insist that the peril of invasion has twice been the subject of exhaustive enquiry by the nation's responsible naval and military experts :—(a) On the authority of Mr. Balfour and six Unionist Secretaries of State, supported by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, Field-Marshal Sir William Nicholson, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Walter Kerr, and Vice-Admiral Prince Louis of Battenberg, we were assured in 1904, after the fullest inquiry, that "serious invasion of these islands is not an eventuality which we need seriously consider," even under circumstances unfavourable to this country—namely, with the Regular Army absent. (b) On the authority of the present Prime Minister and six Liberal Secretaries of State, supported by Field-Marshal Sir William Nicholson, General Sir John French, General J. S. Ewart, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher, and Rear-Admiral E. J. Slade, we were assured in 1909, after another full inquiry, that "invasion on a large scale is an absolutely impracticable operation."

and the responsibility of the United Kingdom for the military defence of the oversea dominions is decreasing year by year as the daughter lands take upon their shoulders the burden of their own defence. Except in South Africa there is not a single British soldier in any of the self-governing dominions. As soon as the Union Government has adopted a scheme of defence, the garrison in South Africa will be decreased.

Then it will be our part in the Old Country to watch with lively interest the progress of the oversea dominions in the evolution of defensive forces planned to secure the freedom of those outlying parts of the Empire. In a few years compulsory military training will be in operation in each of these dominions. Why, it may be asked, if this system is adopted by these kindred peoples, should the inhabitants of the Mother Country shirk a similar responsibility? The conditions in the Old Country and in these new countries are so dissimilar as to vitiate any such implied reproach on the people of the United Kingdom. Unless every able-bodied and physically fit male were compelled to bear arms, neither of these oversea dominions could hope to raise more than a mere handful of men, because the population is so sparse. The whole white population of these dominions is only about twice that of Greater London alone, and therefore every man must undertake the primary duty of defence. The area to be defended is so large, and the resources for defence are so small, that no other policy would be adequate. On the other hand, in



the United Kingdom the population is large, the area to be defended exceedingly small, and a supreme Fleet dominates European waters. We have a population of nearly forty-five millions—a population which is so great as to leave a considerable surplus beyond the requirements of industry. In these circumstances, we have been able to maintain our defences on a voluntary principle. Without compulsory measures, we have under arms in the United Kingdom, serving either ashore or afloat, a body of soldiers and sailors exceeding in number the whole population of the dominion of New Zealand. We are able to provide India with upwards of 75,000 white soldiers, we are able to maintain an expeditionary force of 150,000 ready to go to the assistance of any distant part of the Empire, and we should then retain within our own borders military forces of nearly 400,000 to deal with any such raid as the Committee of Imperial Defence consider possible. Finally, the Fleet has over 130,000 officers and men, and yet we are told by Lord Esher that the voluntary principle of defence is breaking down.

Probably the main cause of the present military agitation is not anxiety for the well-being of the daughter lands, or very acute anxiety as to the possibility of these islands being invaded. If the military propaganda is carefully studied it will be found that a demand is crystallising for such military forces to be raised in the United Kingdom as would enable the British Government to land a considerable army on the Continent of Europe. The suggestion



is that circumstances may occur which will render it desirable for Great Britain to aid France or one of the lesser Powers of Northern Europe against Germany, and it is incumbent upon us, therefore, to increase our military forces. It has never been stated authoritatively exactly what *rôle* the British Army would be called upon to play after it had been safely transported over the sea by the Navy. Presuming that the expeditionary force were increased to 300,000, instead of 150,000 as at present, what would be its probable fate? Any British military expedition, even if it were of the strength of 300,000 men, would be defeated directly it appeared upon the Continent. The natural presumption is that the enemy would direct its overwhelming forces to one end—holding in check the army of France, and it may be of Russia, while the head and front of its vast military organisation would be directed to the extinction of the relatively small body of British troops, and the ruin of British prestige. The whole face of Europe has been changed by the adoption of conscription, and the British Army can never again take any but a perilous part on the Continent, except, under exceptional circumstances, as an incident in the exercise of our naval power. If we had the will, we could not obtain the men, because our population is insufficient. The suggestion that the whole defensive policy of the British people should be recast, at enormous expense, in order that a relatively small number of British soldiers, maybe 300,000, should be held on the leash ready to be cast loose on the Continent of Europe to manœuvre against

either of its vast armies (each of 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 men), is one which the great soldiers of the past would have laughed to scorn. Europe at war strength would have over 20,000,000 men under arms.

The final bar to any such development of British armaments is, however, finance. As has been already shown, for ten years or more the maintenance of the British Fleet will impose upon the country an expense of between £45,000,000 and £50,000,000. If it be admitted, as presumably it is, that the Navy of a sea empire is the essential force, and has the first claim upon the Exchequer, where is the money to be obtained for a simultaneous expansion of the military arm? If the proposals now put forward for developing the Oversea Expeditionary Force and creating a national army for home defence on the lines suggested by Lord Roberts were adopted, what would be the aggregate cost of defence when the Navy Votes have reached their probable maximum of £50,000,000, as there is reason to believe that they will do in a few years, bearing in mind that for the development of the Territorial force the Government will at the same time have to find a sum of about £2,000,000 if Lord Haldane's scheme is not to be ruined :

BRITISH EXPENDITURE : —

British Navy	...	...	...	£50,000,000
British Army	...	...	...	29,000,000
Developing the Oversea Expedi-				
tionary Force	...	...	...	10,300,000*
National Service	...	...	...	7,820,000†
				<hr/> £97,120,000

## 226 THE COMMAND OF THE SEA

### INDIAN AND COLONIAL EXPENDITURE :—

Indian Army	... ..	£20,000,000	
Contribution to the British Fleet and cost of Indian Marine	... ..	150,000	
Expenditure of the Oversea Dominions and Crown Colonies on Naval and Military Defence, including contributions by Crown Colonies to Imperial expenditure (about)	... ..	5,000,000	
		<hr/>	25,150,000
Total	... ..	£122,270,000	

\* Calculated at the average rate of £70 per officer and man, including annuity for capital charges for barracks, guns, &c.

† War Office estimate.

Thus, even if the proposals for large loans for defensive purposes are ignored as bad defence, bad finance, and bad politics, and if no expenditure is made on new coast defences, the bill which would be rendered to the nation if the twin measures of military expansion—a larger Expeditionary Force and “a nation in arms”—were adopted, is so colossal as to condemn these proposals even if they were open to no other objection. If the project for doubling the Oversea Expeditionary Force were eliminated, the cost of armaments falling upon British taxpayers would still amount to nearly £87,000,000. The National Service League, however, contend that the estimated cost of “a nation in arms” has been exaggerated by the responsible experts of the War Office. According to the calculations of the League the cost would be only £4,000,000 or £5,000,000. British legislation is based upon the opinions and calculations of the

responsible experts of the Government, and the estimate of the War Office still stands as a final barrier to the adoption of national service. Even if the lower estimate were the correct one and the sum involved were a matter of only £4,000,000, in these circumstances the bill for national defence falling on the British taxpayers would amount to no less than £83,000,000 annually. If such a vast sum were available for increased British defences it would be a question for the Government whether even the relatively small sum of £4,000,000 could not be spent to greater advantage on the Navy than upon such a national army as Lord Roberts has in view, a national army which would probably be imprisoned to starve with the rest of the population of the British Isles if once the strength of the Fleet were allowed to fall below the Prime Minister's standard of "unassailable supremacy." For the sum which even the National Service League asks, the nation could add to its naval force sixteen ships of the Dreadnought type: in other words, according to the Admiralty, only about £250,000 annually is required to provide interest on the first cost of a Dreadnought, the sinking fund for replacement at the end of twenty years, the pay of officers and men, the cost of maintenance and stores, and the expenditure upon repairs. If ever some future time should bring us an overflowing Exchequer, it would be for the British people to consider whether they would prefer a surplus of £4,000,000 invested in a national army doomed to starve unless the Fleet is supreme, or whether they would desire to

invest this insurance premium in additional naval force so as to make yet more sure the means for defending not only the widely distributed Empire, but the food and raw material which are essential to our existence, and which are threatened by the latest scheme of German naval expansion.

The nation must hold to its old faith ; the Fleet must be recognised in face of increasing rivalry as, in fact as well as in name, the first line of defence, with the first claim upon the Exchequer for its maintenance in unassailable supremacy ; and the Regular Army and the Territorial Army must be regarded as essential but subsidiary branches of his Majesty's services.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BLESSINGS OF NAVAL ARMAMENTS.

THERE is a tendency to regard the heavy outlay from year to year upon our naval defences as an unmitigated evil. Reference is constantly made to "the burden of armaments," and it is sometimes suggested that many of the social evils of our time may be traced directly to the money and energy which are devoted to the maintenance of our sea supremacy. Strict political economists look upon the expenditure as "non-productive." They indulge in wonderful arithmetical calculations as to the "productive" work which could be paid for with the forty odd millions now devoted to naval purposes, and picture the model social system which might immediately come into being if the millennium dawned and war-fleets were no more.

The financial burden of naval armaments is undoubtedly heavy, but there is no country of importance in the world which obtains its defensive forces at so relatively small an outlay and with so little personal inconvenience on the part of the general population as the United Kingdom. It is fortunately so wealthy and so well populated that, apart from the freedom from compulsory military service which the Navy secures, thus contributing directly to our productive power, the *per capita* contribution to the Fleet's support is exceedingly



light. No reasonable person would desire to lay out upon naval defences a single pound more than is necessary to security. But below this level we cannot go, because peace is our highest interest.

The British people themselves, since they adopted twenty years ago the automatic Two-Power standard, have had little or no control over the rate of naval expenditure; that has depended on the activity of the "next two greatest Powers"; as they build we must build.\* In these circumstances a large proportion of the national revenue has to be devoted to the Fleet. There is no way of escape from the liability. The Government has tried to negotiate with rival Powers for a lower scale of expenditure and failed. Since, therefore, it is necessary to devote upwards of forty-four millions—in a few years it will probably be fifty millions—to the Fleet annually, it is as well to remember that the large sums disbursed by the Admiralty are not "practically thrown into a bottomless sea," as some perfervid orators suggest, but contribute materially to the well-being of society as a whole.

It is frequently forgotten that the Board of Admiralty is the largest trading department in the Government, and exercises a more direct control over skilled employment than any private firm. Setting aside the relatively small sums which are devoted to the pensions of officers and men of the

\* The same reasoning applies to the Admiralty's new standard of a 60 per cent. superiority in armoured ships over Germany, and a larger margin in cruisers and destroyers, with any necessary further surplus to provide against the expansion of other fleets.—*Vide* First Lord of Admiralty's speech in introducing the Navy Estimates for 1912-13.

Navy, practically the whole amount voted annually by Parliament for the maintenance of the Navy is distributed in payment of more or less skilled labour. Apart from officers and men of the Fleet numbering over 134,000, and nearly 60,000 reservists, the naval authorities employ in the Royal Dockyards, victualing yards, hospitals, and ordnance stores an army of 30,000 workers, not including a number of women, in a multitude of separate trades, and they are part employers also of the large staff at Woolwich and other arsenals engaged in the manufacture of ordnance. Directly or indirectly the Admiralty also pay wages to a considerable body of men engaged in the construction of docks and in other naval works; while for years past the rebuilding of coastguard stations round the coast has assisted in keeping the building trade active in the various localities affected.

This calculation of the Admiralty's sphere as a labour-employing department takes no account of the more or less indirect influence of the orders which it places with private firms for the construction of ships, the manufacture of machinery, the fashioning of guns and torpedoes, and the making of the hundred and one mechanical appliances which are necessary to the equipment of a modern man-of-war. A first-class battleship is too commonly regarded as a hull round the sides of which are placed a series of armour-plates, while inside are installed some marine engines and a few boilers, and then, with the emplacement of a number of guns on the deck, it is supposed that the vessel is ready to take her place in the Fleet. Years ago, when the construction

of a warship was less complicated than it is to-day, Ruskin declared that man put into it "as much of his human patience, commonsense, forethought, experimental philosophy, self-control, habits of order and obedience, thorough-wrought handiwork, defiance of brute elements, careless courage, careful patriotism and calm acceptance of the judgment of God as could well be put into a space 300 feet long by 80 broad."

Later developments have tended to render the work of constructing a man-of-war far more complicated and delicate than it was in the past. The mere space measures 545 ft. in length and 88 in breadth. A modern ship like a "Dreadnought" has not simply one set of engines for the purposes of propulsion, but, in addition, about one hundred auxiliary engines, each of which fulfils some definite purpose. Practically every operation which a hundred years ago depended either upon the action of the wind or the muscles of the crew is now performed by machinery, and it is no slight task to fashion all these various engines and fit them within a single hull, while at the same time making adequate provision for the guns with their costly, heavy, and elaborate gun mountings, and the torpedo equipment, in itself constituting a specialised science to which men devote their waking hours in the race for perfection. In the mere manufacture of the machinery of such a ship of war as a "Dreadnought," many different trades carried on in various parts of the United Kingdom are concerned; different classes of mechanics are required for the manufacture of the armour and

armaments, the fashioning of the steel plates, the making of all the internal fittings in mess rooms and cabins, and the general sanitary equipment.

It has been calculated that taking the total finished weight of the vessel as a basis of comparison, in a battle cruiser or battleship the number of men-hours varies from 678 to 722 per ton, whereas in liners it is only 401 per ton, and in purely cargo-carrying ships 240 men-hours per ton. Consequently, ton for ton, the battleship provides three times the labour of cargo carriers. In other words, one battleship is worth about twenty normal sized cargo boats, so far as labour is concerned. It has been calculated that, taking the same basis, the labour value of a Dreadnought is probably nearly 10,000,000 men-hours: there are yet no precise figures. That means about 10,000 men could, on such a ship, find employment for 1,000 hours; or, assuming the work to be done within two years, we have full employment during that period for quite 2,000 men. The Navy Estimates show that on the hull alone about 60 per cent. of the cost goes for labour in the case of an unarmoured cruiser like those recently given out, and from 50 to 53 per cent. in the case of a battleship like a "Dreadnought." But in the one case labour gets £74,000, and in the other £230,000. This is only for the hull; there has to be added the labour value of the machinery, which shows an even greater disparity, while the cruiser has little or no work for the armour-maker and the gun-working machinery constructor. While the actual building

of the hull and the assembly and fitting of the various parts of the ship must naturally take place at the water side, the material which goes to the creation of the ship is designed and made in far-distant and widely distributed inland towns, and there are few "tradesmen" working in iron, steel, brass, and wood, who are not involved in the general scheme of work which almost automatically comes into existence as soon as the Admiralty decides to add a new man-of-war to the British Fleet.

The scale upon which we maintain our naval defences brings to us not a few compensating advantages. As the supreme naval Power, whose security depends almost entirely upon the sufficiency and efficiency of our naval forces, we have been led to create great industries which primarily depend upon the Fleet for maintenance. The fact that the Admiralty places year by year large orders for various kinds of war material has encouraged the upbuilding of large industries with the best possible industrial organisation, the most efficient labour-saving machinery, and the most expert mechanics. The price of any article depends largely upon the efficiency of the industrial organisation and the scale of production. The Admiralty has been a fairy godmother to the steel and iron industries of the country and to the many auxiliary trades. The result is that these industries have reached a pitch of perfection which enables the great English firms to go out into the markets of the world and compete for orders on advantageous terms. There are under construction in this country battleships for Brazil, Chili, and

Turkey, a battle-cruiser for Japan, three small armoured ships for Brazil, besides scout-cruisers for China, and a number of torpedo craft for different countries. At the same time British firms are supervising the reconstruction of the Russian fleet—in the Black Sea and Baltic—and of the Spanish fleet at Cartagena and Ferrol, and British admirals are managing the navies of Turkey and Greece.

There is not a navy in the world to which British shipbuilders have not contributed units of one class or other. Though the British Fleet has not been on active war service for practically a hundred years (if we omit subsidiary assistance which has been given from time to time to the British Army), there has been no naval engagement in the past fifty years in which on one side or the other British-built warships have not been engaged. British-built ships fought in the China seas during the struggle between China and Japan; British-built ships fought in the Pacific during the contest between the United States and Spain; and British-built ships again were used by Japan with such surprising results during the war with Russia. In almost every naval port in the world may be seen British-built men-of-war flying foreign ensigns and manned by foreign crews. Had it not been for the encouragement towards large capital expenditure on works and machinery given by the British Admiralty, British firms would have been unable to secure these orders, representing tens of millions sterling, the larger part of which has been translated into wage payments to British workmen.



This is not the only influence which the Navy exercises upon trade and industry. It is a common saying that trade follows the flag—and it might be added that it also follows the missionary—but almost always the British Navy flying the White Ensign goes first, and the trader follows immediately upon the heels of the naval officer. During the last century it was the Navy by its active work which opened up to the British trader his predominating sphere of activity in Japan, in China, and throughout the Far East. It was the British Navy primarily which secured to us the oversea dominions which are now emerging into full manhood as autonomous nations under the British flag. In South America the trader and the capitalist followed behind the White Ensign, and built up those close commercial bonds with the South American Republics which have proved a benefit alike to the native population and an advantage to British capitalists in search of fields for profitable investment. Trade has followed the flag in the past, and it still follows the flag. It is under the protection afforded by the White Ensign carried by British men-of-war that the mercantile marine has steadily grown from year to year until it now embraces half the shipping of the world. England is the world's Carter, Paterson, largely because she is also the world's supreme naval Power. Merchant ships would cease to enjoy the freedom of the seas were it not for the ubiquitous protection against aggression and interference which the supreme British Navy provides.

Among the blessings of naval armaments must

also be included the influence of the Navy as a social and ameliorative institution. The Fleet is one of the most powerful temperance organisations of the day. It is calculated that about 20 per cent. of the men of the Fleet abstain altogether from alcoholic liquors, and all the remainder are compelled to be strictly temperate. No officer or man with ambition to rise in the profession can afford to indulge to excess. The daily life at sea in these days of mechanical complication in the control of his Majesty's ships is too onerous and exacting for any man who is not of distinctly abstemious habits. Drunkenness, which is not necessarily a crime ashore, is a crime in the Navy, because temperance is required by the Articles of War in the interest not of the individual but of the nation. It will be a happy day for England when it is recognised ashore that drunkenness is not merely a humiliation of the individual and a hardship on those who are dependent upon him, but is distinctly a crime against the State. The Navy sets to the country generally a high ideal in this respect.

The Fleet also performs an important service as an academy of physique, quite apart from its influence for good as a disciplinary force regulated and controlled without violence. Only those who are familiar with life afloat can fully appreciate the influence of the Navy upon the thousands of men who undergo its training. Unlike the mechanic ashore, the bluejacket lives with his work. His thoughts can never be far removed from his daily task. From early in the morning until late at night he is always liable to be called upon for service, and

week in and week out he has to submit to a rigorous system of drills, all framed with the single aim of contributing to the war efficiency of the Fleet. The result of his daily routine and almost hourly association with the various mechanical processes in the gun barbette, in the torpedo flat, in the magazines, in the engine room, or in the stokehold, is to produce in the Navy a quickness of mind, a sensibility of intelligence, and a promptness of action far above that which is to be found as a rule in a similar class ashore. Nor do the naval authorities neglect the physique of those who enlist for naval service. They have gradually created a school of gymnasia with a large staff distributed throughout the different fleets and squadrons in all the seas of the world. Week by week these instructors carry on a course of physical drill which has been found by experience to produce the most remarkable results in building up the physique of the men of the Fleet.

Under existing circumstances, the several hundred professional Sandows who are borne in the ships of his Majesty's Fleet are engaged in a work which has more than taken the place of the drills of the old days of ships, yards, and arms. The *personnel* of the Fleet numbers over 134,000, and the thought that so many men are gaining the advantage of a carefully thought-out scheme of physical culture is no slight compensation in these days of degeneration for the oft-deplored "burden of naval armaments." Owing to the introduction of a partial system of short service many men serve only five years in the Fleet, and then pass back into civil life as reservists, revealing all

the advantages which undoubtedly accrue from this course of physical culture in the finest disciplined force in the world.

Under the new *régime* of good, well-cooked food, a high standard of discipline, and a varied course of physical culture, the health of the Fleet men, despite exposure to all weathers, continues to improve. In the past ten years the average loss of service for each person from illness has steadily declined, and there has been a remarkable fall in the ratio of men invalided out of the service in the past five years, while the death-rate has decreased to 3.35 per 1,000, a gain of 1.79 in comparison with the average ratio for the preceding nine years, in spite of the fact that the Navy is on duty on the West Coast of Africa, up the rivers of China, and in other unhealthy localities. It is no slight advantage to the country to have one branch of the national service in which temperance is regarded as essential to efficiency and drunkenness a crime against the State, and in which men, before passing back into civil life, gain all the benefits of a strict, rational discipline and a carefully planned course of physical culture.

Among the blessings of naval armaments it is impossible to ignore the influence which our close association with the sea has had and still has on our social and political ideals. It is a German writer who has remarked that " Out of the infinite horizon there grows in the mind and character of seafaring people a strong tendency towards boldness, fortitude, and long-sightedness. Seafaring nations have ma-

terially contributed to the enlargement and heightening of political standards. To them narrow territorial politics appear but short-sighted policy. The wide, open sea serves to enlarge the views of both merchants and statesmen. The sea alone can produce truly great Powers."

In an article which he contributed to the *Scientific American*, Rear-Admiral Mahan dealt with this aspect of the matter, in reviewing the development of the policy of the United States since the acquisition of the Philippines. He remarked on the gradual, yet perpetual, process by which a higher civilisation impinges upon a lower ; that is, upon one that is lower in virile efficiency, however in some instances it may have been higher in acquired material comfort, or even in literary and artistic achievement. This tendency, he contended, can neither be regulated by law, nor brought to the bar of law, without injury to the progress of the world toward better universal conditions, to which end it is essential that the efficient supplant the inefficient. On the other hand, this condition illustrates the importance of the command of the sea. This also, it should be noted, has been incidental and determinative in the progress of the world.

Continuing this line of argument, the distinguished American writer added :

" This moral side of the question is not irrelevant to the military one of the importance of commanding the sea ; for granting the end—the moral obligation—the means, if not themselves immoral, follow as a matter of course. Of such means, command of the

sea is one. Napoleon said that *morale* dominates war ; and it is correspondingly true that a sense of right powerfully reinforces the stability of national attitude and the steadfastness of national purpose. If we have been right, morally, step by step, in the forward march of the past few years, we are morally bound to sustain the position attained, by measures which will provide the necessary means. Of these an adequate navy is among the first ; probably, in our case, the chief of all."

Having in these sentences stated his contention in broad terms, Admiral Mahan recurred to experience—to the past—in order to comprehend the present and project the future.

" Why do English innate political conceptions of popular representative government, of the balance of law and liberty, prevail in North America from the Arctic Circle to the Gulf of Mexico, from the Atlantic to the Pacific ? Because the command of the sea at the decisive era belonged to Great Britain. In India and Egypt, administrative efficiency has taken the place of a welter of tyranny, feudal struggle, and bloodshed, achieving thereby the comparative welfare of the once harried populations. What underlies this administrative efficiency ? The British Navy, assuring in the first instance British control instead of French and thereafter communication with the home country, whence the local power without which administration everywhere is futile. What, at the moment the Monroe Doctrine was proclaimed, insured beyond peradventure the immunity from foreign oppression of the Spanish-American colonies



in their struggle for independence? The command of the sea by Great Britain, backed by the feeble navy but imposing strategic position of the United States, with her swarm of potential commerce-destroyers, which a decade before had harassed the trade of even the mistress of the seas.

"Less conspicuously, but no less truly, to what do Algiers and Tunis, and to what eventually will Morocco, owe redemption from conditions barely, if at all, above the barbarous? To the command of the sea by a nation which already has restored the former two, to be fruitful members of the world community. That South Africa is now a united commonwealth, instead of two opposing communities, such as the North and South of our own country might have been, is due to the same cause; a local preponderance of force insured by sea power. It may safely be claimed that to the navy of the United States chiefly is owing the present Union, instead of the existence of two rival nations vying, or trying to vie, with each other in military preparations, like the nations of Europe. The four years' struggle of the Confederate States might not have ended in exhaustion, had it not been for the blockade, which shut in their cotton and shut out their supplies."

And then Admiral Mahan presented the other side of the picture:

"Contrast this impressive exhibit, where the command of the sea has been operative, with the history and achievement of those great States which have not possessed it. Contrast Bosnia and Herze-

govina for Austria, Alsace and Lorraine for Germany, with the expansion of France, Great Britain, Holland, and with that which Spain once possessed ; now lost through an inefficiency, one of the first symptoms of which was the decay of her navy. The magnificent efficiency of the present German Empire strives now, against almost hopeless disadvantage, for the opportunity to exercise that efficiency outside its European limits. Opportunity was lost through the absence of naval force, in the past centuries, when the maritime countries were occupying, and, in accordance with their respective political aptitudes, were determining the future of immense tracts of the world. Much time must elapse before we shall know the inside history of the still unarranged dispute with France about Morocco (1911), but there is reason to believe that the consciousness of the British Navy at the back of France has been one of the large factors in the negotiations. At least it is apparent that bitterness against Great Britain has been even more marked than against France."

We cannot ignore the influence of the sea atmosphere on our history in the past and the influence which it still exerts in widening the social and political horizon of the British people and checking the tendency of political thought to circle round the parish pump and the market-place. We owe our rich heritage and our supreme position in the world's commerce to our habit of mind as a seafaring nation ; we owe our salvation from revolutionary movements in no small degree to the same healthful, broadening influence.

Considering the manifold blessings of naval armaments enjoyed by all the British peoples, it ill becomes us to wring our hands because in the competition for these benefits we are compelled to pay a high price. Naval rivalry is keen because the blessings which may be derived from naval armaments are so great. If we would continue to enjoy the blessings, we must bear the burden. The world places a heavy price on our supremacy. That is the best evidence to its intrinsic value. Fortunately, owing to our industrial position, we buy our sea power in the cheapest market, and derive from our Fleet more solid advantages than any other people in the world.



## DATE DUE

2. 1984

RECD SEP 10 1984

DEC 2 1985

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----



3 1970 00266 0840

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



**AA** 000 597 272 4



